



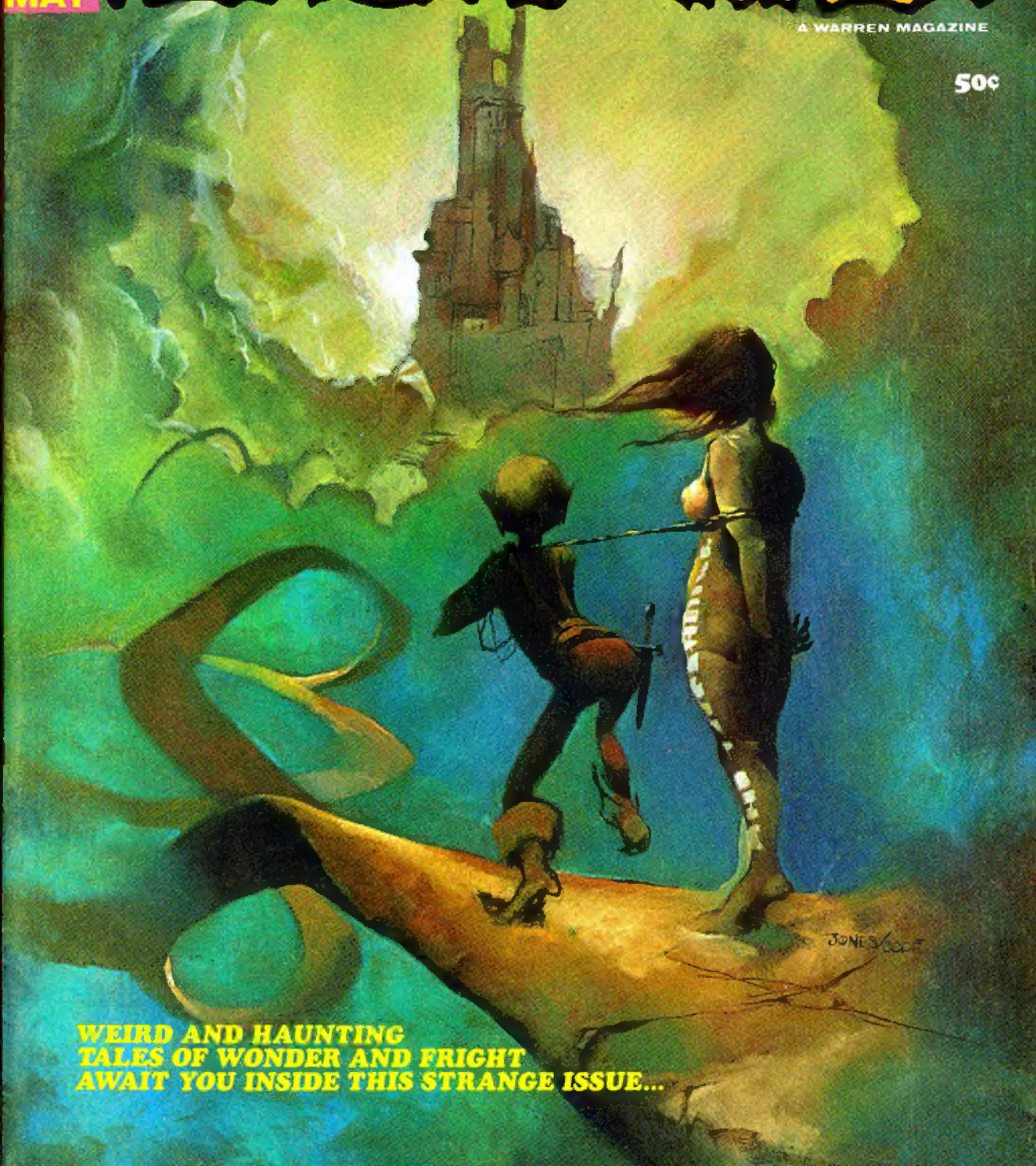
EERIE
27
MAY

EERIE

PDC

A WARREN MAGAZINE

50¢



**WEIRD AND HAUNTING
TALES OF WONDER AND FRIGHT
AWAIT YOU INSIDE THIS STRANGE ISSUE...**

EERIE'S MONSTER GALLERY!

SALUTATIONS SLIME SURFERS! SETTLE DOWN NEXT TO THAT TWO-HEADED TOAD AND PLEASE... NO COFFIN FITS DURING OUR GARRULOUS GALLERY GANDER AT A GARGANTUAN GARGOYLE KNOWN AS...

THE GOLEM

EMERGING OUT OF THE STYGIAN DEPTHS OF THE DARK AGES COMES THE INCREDIBLE **GOLEM!** BORN OF THE STRANGE MAGIC OF A LEGENDARY MEDIAEVAL ALCHEMIST, THIS UNHOLY HORROR WAS THE GREAT GRAND-DADDY OF THE **FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER!** THE DREADFUL FATE OF THOSE UNFORTUNATES TOUCHED BY THE GROTESQUE GOLEM SERVES AS A GRIM WARNING TO ANY MORTAL WHO WOULD TAMPER WITH THE AWESOME SECRETS OF LIFE... AND DEATH!

EERIE

NO. 27

PUBLISHER: JAMES WARREN

EDITOR: BILL PARENTE

COVER: BODE AND JONES **ARTISTS THIS ISSUE:** KEN BARR, ERNIE COLON, MIGUEL FERNANDEZ, DICK PISCOPO, MIKE ROYER, JACK SPARLING, TOM SUTTON

WRITERS THIS ISSUE: NICOLA CUTI, GARDNER FOX, BILL PARENTE, R. MICHAEL ROSEN, BUDDY SAUNDERS, BILL WARREN

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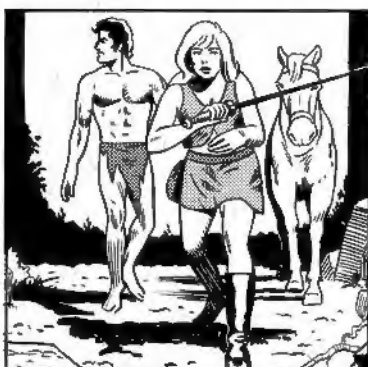
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DEAR COUSIN EERIE



FOR BIG SPENDERS

Jerry Finkelstein's comments in issue #25 were acutely annoying to me. He states that your "competition's" horror comics are a very good buy at 35c a copy. If he buys all four of them, big spender Finkelstein saves a grand total of 45c over the three Warren magazines. But is it worth it? There is one word to describe those other magazines, but I won't use it here. Instead, I'll call them just plain "sick." Their covers depict the most nauseating carnage. The latest issue of one of them shows a screaming woman being ground up into sausages. And the interiors are composed of pretty bad reprints from the 30's and 40's. No sense of terror or imagination, no memorable moments. Their attempts at guignol horror are so bad, they're funny. Just YECCCHHH! Warren's quality is a fine example of what comics can do when they're unfettered by restricting codes. But what other stuff provides censors with just the sort of trash they can run down and use against uncensored comics. Yet these magazines continue to stay on the market, selling the copies needed to keep them in business. Steady customers like Jerry Finkelstein are doing great damage to the creative comic field. But they save that important 15c an issue. I hope the rest of us don't have to pay a higher price—watching the good magazines go down the drain with the bad ones.

BRAD LINAWEAVER
Apopka, Fla.

EVERYBODY'S DOING IT

I would like to tell you that

☹☹ Makes you realize how good Eerie is ☹☹

you publish a great rag. And I hope you keep up the ghoulish work. I would also like to ask if you have any pinups of **VAMPIRELLA**. If not, would you consider making one? It's not fair for you to keep her all to yourself.

JOHN HOWELL
Lawton, Okla.



I'd like to pin that upstart up all right. To a wall. By the ears. If you want her picture, ask her.

THE WARREN CURSE

I remember seeing the notice in **FAMOUS MONSTERS** #31 that **CREEPLY**, a new magazine of fantasy horror and science fiction, would soon be published. I hadn't seen anything like that since the days of E. C. and the horror books of the Marvel group. I enjoyed those first issues, and in 1966—my favorite year—you announced the coming of **EERIE**. During the rest of that year, and for the first few months of the next, I really enjoyed the output of the Warren Publishing Company. Then both began going down. You began reprinting stuff I was afraid you'd suffer the curse of Warren. I'll explain this curse: During the early 60's, flushed with the success of **F.M.**, Warren put out **WILDEST WESTERNS**, **SPACEMEN**, **SCREEN THRILLS ILLUSTRATED** and **BLAZING COMBAT**, all of which were immediately hurled into oblivion. Now **FAMOUS MONSTERS** seems doomed, since it no longer has 100 pages. But it's managed to hang on so far. Since the arrival of **VAMPIRELLA**—which has a huge following because of the great art—you have shown signs of improvement. But you have to work harder. Watch out for the curse. It can strike again.

STEPHEN DARNER
Bronx, N.Y.

SOME PEOPLE LIKE REPRINTS

I am an old fan of horror and terror and when I discovered Warren magazines, I was delighted. I am not going to rate your stories, but I have an idea. Why don't you reprint some of the lesser-known stories from your earlier issues instead of just the better-liked ones. Everyone has their own taste in stories. Also, please use Tony Williams' less often. Let us have more of Steve Ditko and Jerry Gande-netti. Especially Jerry's gorgeous eyes! Your magazine needs more beauty. The idea of beauty corrupted, powerful

and triumphant has always fascinated me. Give us more of the classical-type monsters, too. I hope I'm not overburdening you with demands, but if you wish to continue being the only high-class horror magazine, you must keep your material high-rate. I keep noticing sneaky sex plugs in your stories. If you find it necessary to lower your standards to satisfy those with no standards, you will lose your most loyal fans. I'm sure others feel the way I do, too.

SANDRA NERASKY
Pearl River, N.Y.

BETTER THAN EVER

I want to thank you for such a good cover on issue #25. It makes you realize how good **EERIE** really is. Jim Steranko is such a good artist that he should draw all your covers. He is really fantastic.

PAUL MEADE
Santa Cruz, Cal.

WEREWOLVES AND FLYING SAUCERS

Issue #25 was the greatest! Your rags must have sold like crazy last month. The cover was fair, but inside, two pages for letters. Wow! Please, please have more stories about werewolves. And flying saucers. Your Uncle **CREEPLY**, boy, that's another story! I took one look at the cover of his last issue and was really shocked. I thought to myself, "Gee, this just has to be one of those cheapies. It couldn't possible be one of the great Warren magazines." But sure enough, it was. I didn't even bother to look inside. The cover looked like a joke. And I sure wasn't going to pay half a buck for a joke. I have enough trouble getting the money for **EERIE**.

JOHN ALEXANDER
Covington, Ohio



Lucky you didn't look inside. He's got two pages for letters, too.

AND THROW AWAY THE KEY

I am an avid reader of all your magazines, and I thought it was about time I wrote a letter expressing my gratitude for all the hours of sheer horror they have given me. I would like to comment on the letters page in **EERIE** #25. I think you have a right to charge more than your competitors. Your magazines are the finest in the field of comic book horror. All the other magazines of this type have lousy artwork and worse stories. They are, in my opinion, thoroughly sickening.

If letter writer David McTaggart thinks that the recent **EERIE** covers have been in bad taste, or "trashy" as he puts it, I think he should be locked in his room and kept away from the rest of the world. Not that I don't respect his opinion, but I think that was a little ridiculous. One more thing—and I'm sure you've heard this a million times at least—please get Frank Frazetta to do more work on all your magazines.

DAVID O'DELL
Sunnyvale, Cal.

NO TRASH COLLECTOR

I have just read issue #25. The cover was good, but I liked the one on #24 better. In the letters page, a fan said that you had driven him to the competition because they were very good for the money. Good! The issues I've seen were all pretty bad. And those covers! Ugh! They really give us terror fans a bad image. Not to mention what they do to a person's stomach. I agree with David McTaggart about your covers, though. Although the art was good, I had to pass up buying **EERIE** #23 because my parents would have called it trash if they had seen its cover. I hope Frazetta can do an inside story for you. But you had better check carefully for side effects from the "persuasion" he went through.

NEAL SIMONSEN
Portland, Ore.

ART COLLECTOR

First I got **EERIE**. All the back issues and a long-term subscription. Then a friend of mine showed me his collection of your raving Uncle **CREEPLY**, so I got all the **CREEPLYS**. Now I'm collecting all of **VAMPIRELLA**. But your magazine was first with me and will always be best even though I collect the others. James Steranko's art is almost as good as Frank Frazetta's, which is saying a lot.

BRIAN C. CARRICK
Bakersfield, Cal.

BETTER THAN FRAZETTA?

Jim Steranko, who beautifully painted the cover of issue #25, is, in my opinion, one of the most talented men alive today. Other than being the author of a highly-acclaimed book dealing with card magic, a musician, an escape artist and master of many other occupations, he is the one man responsible for changing the

● Steranko is one of the most talented men alive ●

comic world today. He was the first to introduce optical illusions and other modern special effects to comics. He was the first—as far as I know—to spread one picture across four pages. He was first to introduce cinematic angles to the comic page. And he keeps innovating! Many of your other artists—along with a multitude of other well-knowns—have imitated his layout style. But all of them have fallen far short of Jim's greatness. Please use more of his covers. And ask him to illustrate a horror story of his own making.

RICHARD BARTRAM
Huntington, W. Va.

MORE STIRRING FOR STERANKO

I loved all of issue #25. You certainly had a lot in it about vampires. This makes me very happy—the more the merrier. I noticed that great cover was painted by Jim Steranko. Doesn't he sometimes work for Marvel Comics? This was the best thing he's ever done. I missed issues #20 and #22. They never

even arrived at my favorite newsstand. When I realized I had missed them, I almost died. Another thing that makes me furious is David McTaggart's comments on the covers of issues #23 and #22. I thought they were just beautiful.

JOHN STEPHENS
Pell City, Ala.

STILL MORE

Steranko's cover on issue #25 really sent me. But I think he might do better on the interior of the magazine. Jim's a great artist, but not a great painter. He can certainly add to the thrill of **EERIE**, but with one exception. Steranko is an impressionist who likes to try new ideas. To fully enjoy his artwork, you have to see it in color. The rest of issue #25 was, as usual, exceptional. Actually, I have just one complaint, and that is continued stories. "Southern Exposure," by the way, was probably the worst story you have ever published. But I can't wait for the next issue.

MIKE BYRD
Cocoa, Fla.



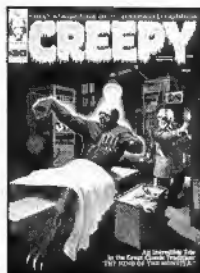
JIM STERANKO started this deluge of praise with his cover for issue #25. Is it true what they say? Send us your comments. And while you're at it, let us have your opinion on

some of the other great artists and writers who make **EERIE** so eerie. Address your letter to:
EERIE LETTERS
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FIE, OH FIE, *FANTASTS!* DON'T TELL ME YOUR IMAGINATION HAS FALLEN INTO FERMENTATION? UNCORK THAT URANIUM INSIDE YOUR CRANIUM AND FULMINATE A FANTASY THAT'LL *REALLY* PAIN YOUR BRAIN-IUM! IN *THIS* MIND BLINDER, WE TAKE A ...

Journey into WONDER

KEN BARR

IT WAS KING XENIA'S BIRTHDAY AND THROUGHOUT HALIDOM, A PROCLAMATION OF ROYAL HOLIDAY WAS READ TO HIS SUBJECTS. IN TRIBUTE, HIS KNIGHTS CAME TO BRING HIM GREAT PROMISES OF ALLEGIANCE.

AMONG THOSE MEN OF ARMOR, THERE ALSO CAME A **DWARF!** TO ANYONE WHO HAD NEVER SEEN HIM, HIS NAME WAS **GRENDL-** TO THOSE WHO **HAD**, HE WAS CALLED... **UGLY!**

YOUR MAJESTY, THE DWARF, GRENDL, SEEKS YOUR INDULGENCE...

AND PRAY, WHAT BRINGS THIS **MIGHTY** SUBJECT TO HIS MAJESTY'S COURT?

WHY ELSE, MY FRIEND NISCUS, BUT TO PLEDGE HIS COURAGE.

HA! YOU ARE MISTAKEN, SIR LEAR THERE ARE NO FIELD-MICE TO BE SLAIN HERE!

GASP!
LOO-LOOK!

YOUR
MAJESTY!

YOU MAY
RISE, GRENDL,
AND EXPLAIN
YOUR VISIT
HERE.

SIRE,
HE BRINGS
YOU A
GIFT.

HIS *FACE*
YOUR MAJESTY.
THAT IS HIS GIFT!
WITH IT, YOU CAN
FRIGHTEN ALL OUR
ENEMIES AWAY!

IF YOU ARE
AMUSED, SIR NISCLUS,
THAT IS *YOUR* MISTAKE.
I ASK NOTHING
OF YOU...

...FOR WHAT
I SEEK, ONLY A
KING CAN GIVE.
IT IS A *LAW* OF OUR
KINGDOM THAT EACH
MAN BE ALLOWED
THE PRIVILEGE.

KNIGHTHOOD,
SIRE... I ASK
FOR MY
SWORD!

LATER, IN THE KING'S PRIVATE CHAMBERS—

KNIGHTHOOD!
SURELY THE GNOME
DOES NOT EXPECT
SUCH A
RANK!

YOUR MAJESTY,
MUST WE TOLERATE
THIS OUTRAGE?

OF COURSE, THIS
GRENFEL **MUST** BE
REFUSED! SUCH A
THING WOULD ONLY
DISGRACE US.

I LIKE THE
DWARF LESS THAN
ANY OF YOU, BUT ON
THE FEAST OF A KING'S
BIRTHDAY, **ANY** MAN
WHO THINKS HIMSELF
WORTHY, MAY ASK
TO BE DUBBED.

TRUE, YOUR
MAJESTY, BUT ARE
YOU FORGETTING HIS
TASK OF ACCEPTANCE
BEFORE SUCH AN
HONOR CAN
BE BESTOWED?

BY HIS VERY
IMPUDENCE, THIS **POLLINGOS**
CONSIDERS HIMSELF **BETTER**
THAN WE. SHOULD HIS
TASK, THEREFORE, BE
ANYTHING LESS?

AS EACH OF **US**
HAS DONE, WHAT FEAT
WILL BE REQUIRED
OF THE DWARF, TO
GAIN HIM THE
TITLE OF... SIR?

WHAT IS
YOUR SUGGESTION
BROTHER?

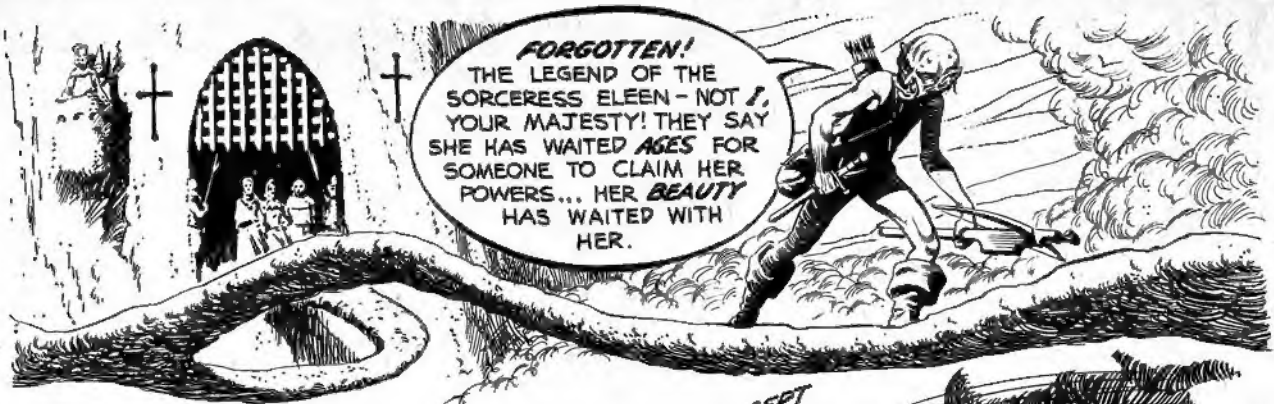
IF HE MUST
"PROVE HIMSELF—

—WHAT BETTER
SIGN OF HIS COURAGE
THAN HIS GIFT TO KING XENIA
OF THE **SORCERESS ELEN?**

OF COURSE! **NO**
MAN HAS EVER RETURNED
FROM FORGOTTEN MOUNTAIN.
ELEN IS A CHILD OF
MAGIC!

THE DWARF
WILL **NEVER** BE
ABLE TO CARRY OUT
SUCH A TASK!

UNLESS YOU'VE
FORGOTTEN THE
LEGEND ABOUT THE
SORCERESS?



FORGOTTEN!
THE LEGEND OF THE
SORCERESS ELEEN - NOT I,
YOUR MAJESTY! THEY SAY
SHE HAS WAITED AGES FOR
SOMEONE TO CLAIM HER
POWERS... HER *BEAUTY*
HAS WAITED WITH
HER.



...HER HAVEN IS UNKNOWN, UNFOUND-EXCEPT
BY A FEW MEN WHO **DARED** TO UNHIDE HER.
NONE OF THEM EVER RETURNED TO TELL OF
THEIR JOURNEY INTO WONDER! SO ELEEN
STILL REMAINS A **MYSTERY!**



THE BEAST THAT PROTECTS
HER, HOWEVER, HAS **NOT** REMAINED
A MYSTERY! SCARCELY ANYONE
HAS EVEN FOUND
FORGOTTEN
MOUNTAIN!

FIND ME THIS SORCERESS.
BRING HER TO ME, AND I
WILL WELCOME YOU AS
SIR GRENDEL.

...TO REACH
THE MOUNTAIN, ONE
FIRST HAS TO PASS

THE GRINKA!




IF HE
RETURNS!



AND **WE** MUST
MAKE CERTAIN
HE DOES **NOT!**
DO YOU
UNDERSTAND?

CERTAINLY, BROTHER...
MOST CERTAINLY!





AND WHAT
BUSINESS IS IT
OF YOURS
CRONE?

ONLY THAT I WOULD
TELL YOU HOW TO
FIND THE SORCERESS,
IF YOU WOULD
PROMISE ME A FAVOR
IN RETURN.

AN ARROW OF *DEATH*,
PUT HERE TO MARK THE
BEGINNING OF *DANGER*!

AND WILL
YOU *HEED* ITS
WARNING, MY FRIEND,
OR CONTINUE
YOUR JOURNEY?

IF YOU COULD DO THAT, OLD
WOMAN, WHATEVER PROMISE
YOU ASK, IS YOURS...

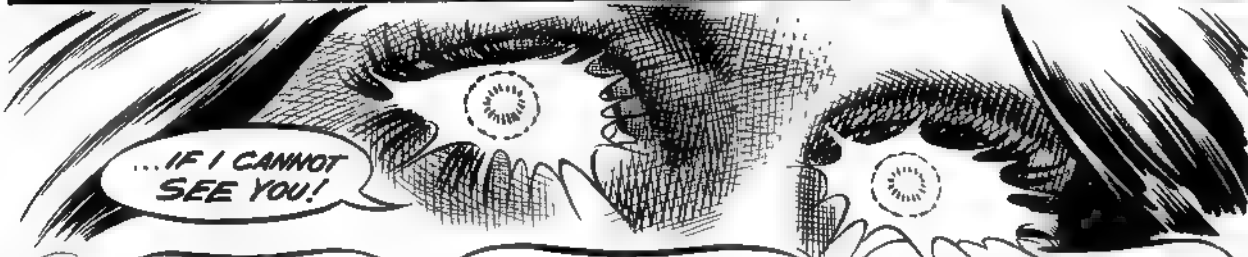
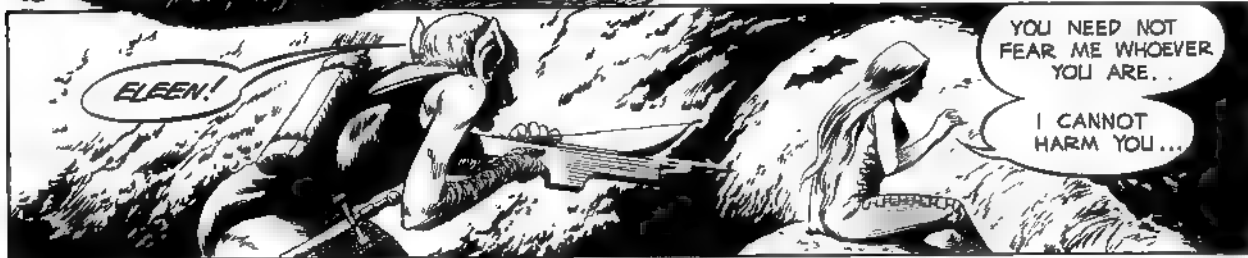
JUST A *RING*,
LITTLE MAN,
STOLEN FROM
ME BY THE
SORCERESS,
RETURN IT,
AND I WILL
DRAW YOU A
MAP TO
FOLLOW!

AGREED!

AND WHEN I HAVE IT, *IMP*!
THERE WILL BE NO ONE
TO OPPOSE MY POWERS!
HEHEHEHEHEH!

I HOPE *YOU*
HAVE MORE LUCK THAN
THE OTHERS I HELPED
BEFORE YOU. ALL *THEY* FOUND
AT THE END OF THEIR
JOURNEY WAS...

THE GRINKA!



I WAS ENSPELLED BY A WITCH
OF THIS FOREST WHO
WANTED THE RING'S
POWERS.
ONLY BY ACCIDENT
DID I STUMBLE
INTO THIS PLACE.

AND THE TALES
OF YOUR SORCERY...
MERELY **FABLES**
AS MAKE-BELIEVE
AS YOUR MAGIC

THAT I'LL DO, IF **YOU** WILL PROMISE
TO RETURN WITH ME TO HALIDOM.
KING XENIA AWAITS US TO...

ONE DAY, THE
GRINKA WILL **DEVOUR**
ME, UNLESS YOU
HELP ME TO
ESCAPE!

IT MIGHT AS WELL
BE **IMMORTAL**, FOR ALL
THIS ARROW WILL DO-
UNLESS...

**THE
BEAST!**
HIDE YOURSELF,
QUICKLY!

USE **THIS...**
TO PROTECT
YOURSELF!

GRENDEL WONDERED IF THE RING, OR HIS OWN WIT HAD DEFEATED THE CREATURE, AND, THUS, FREED FROM CAPTIVITY, AND GUIDED BY THE DWARF...

...THE PRINCESS ELEEN ALLOWED HIM TO LEAD HER BACK TO HALIDOM, AND THE AWAITING KING XENIA...



I CAN SEE IT, ELEEN... THE CASTLE!



YOU **ASTOUND** ME GRENDEL! HOW WERE YOU ABLE TO DO WHAT KNIGHTS **TWICE** YOUR SIZE COULD NOT?

FOR THAT, SIRE, I OWE MY THANKS TO THE PRINCESS, ELEEN.

YOUR MAJESTY.



A PRINCESS, INDEED! YOUR MAJESTY, THIS OGRE WOULD TAKE US FOR FOOLS! HE LIES! THE GIRL IS NO MORE THAN A **WENCH!**



... AND IF, SHE IS **NOT** AN IMPOSTER...

LET THE TRUTH BE DECIDED...



...in a Trial by Arms!

SIRE, I, SIR NISCUS, PLEDGE MY VICTORY TO YOU! LONG LIVE KING XENIA.

AND I, YOUR MAJESTY, PLEDGE BY THE BATTLE THAT I HAVE SPOKEN THE TRUTH!

LET THE TRIAL BEGIN!





THIS RING, SIRE - WITHOUT IT - I WOULD SURELY HAVE LOST!

I THINK NOT, GRENDDEL IT WAS YOUR **COURAGE** THAT BROUGHT YOU VICTORY!

YOU HAVE SHOWN YOURSELF A BETTER MAN THAN MOST. RISE, **SIR** GRENDDEL, AND ACCEPT YOUR REWARD.



THESE TWO, I THOUGHT WERE NOBLE! **JACKANAPES...** BOTH OF THEM...

THEN A WONDROUS MIRACLE OCCURED LIKE THE MAKING OF A WISH, COME TRUE. IN THAT MOMENT, ELEEN'S VISION RETURNED TO HER...

...AND FOR THE FIRST TIME, GRENDDEL APPEARED IN HER EYES. ELEEN LOOKED AT HER KNIGHT AND SMILED. HE WAS **EXACTLY** AS SHE HAD **IMAGINED**.

(SNIFF) ISN'T THAT SIMPLY (SNIFF) **ARMOROUS**? SIR GRENDDEL GOT HIS GIRL, **SHE** GOT HER **HE...** AND OUR **SWINGY** KINGY GOT TO DO HIS THINGY WITH THAT **ZINGY** RINGY. (SIGH)

...TAKE THE RING, SIR KNIGHT, IT BELONGS TO THE PRINCESS - AND **SHE** BELONGS TO **YOU!**



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Pin-ups



EAST OF THE WIND AND WEST OF THE ROAD LIES THAT LAND CALLED KARKASSONE. IT IS A PLEASANT LAND FOR THE MOST PART, WITH MEADOWS, HILLS AND GRASSY DALES. YET THERE ARE ALSO MOORS AND SPIRIT- HAUNTED SWAMPS, AND POOLS WHERE PIXIES ARE AFRAID TO PLAY! A USURPER SITS UPON THE THRONE IN KARKASSONE CITY, BEFRIENDED BY THE WICKED SORCERESS, LLYRITH THE UNHOLY. THE PEOPLE GROAN UNDER THE CRUEL, MERCILESS RULE OF HERMOTIMOS THE HATEFUL, AND PRAY EVER FOR A SAVIOR. THEN OUT OF THE NORTHERN LANDS COMES A GIRL-BARBARIAN, NAMED...

AMAZONIA

MY GUARDIAN... DYZLANN THE SORCERER... INSISTED I UNDER- TAKE THIS QUEST, BUT BY TEN TINTED TOENAILS OF TANIT! IF I DIDN'T KNOW THE OLD MAN LOVED ME... I'D SAY HE WAS SEND- ING ME TO MY DOOM!



DEEP IN THE DEMON- HAUNTED GLADES OF WIZARD'S WOOD A MAID COMES GALLOPING... GALLOPING BETWEEN THE GHASTLY GHOULS AND EVIL KOBOLDS INFESTING THIS CORNER OF HER WORLD! DEATH GIBBERS FROM EVERY BRANCH, EVERY LEAF! YET, ONWARD SHE HURTLES, EVER ONWARD TOWARD THE DESTINY WRITTEN FOR HER IN THE ETERNAL PAGES OF THE BOOK OF THE ELDER GODS. FOR THIS IS AMAZONIA, BARBARIC DAUGHTER OF FEDRIK, WHO WAS AFORETIME KING IN KARKASSONE. SHE RIDES NOW TO THE CITY OF HER FORE- FATHERS, CARRYING THE IRON CROWN WHICH IS HER OWN IN- HERITANCE. HER DESTINY DEMANDS THAT SHE GIVE UP THIS CROWN WHICH IS HERS BY RIGHT-- AND THAT SHE PLACE THE IRON CROWN INSTEAD OF THE HEAD OF THE USURPER, HERMOTIMOS THE HATEFUL!

THE WEIRD OF THE IRON CROWN!

HER SWORD SPARKLES WITH THAT EERIE FIRE STEEL GIVES OFF WHEN IT CLEAVES THROUGH DEMON FLESH...

NONE SHALL BAR MY WAY! ASIDE, FOUL FIENDS...



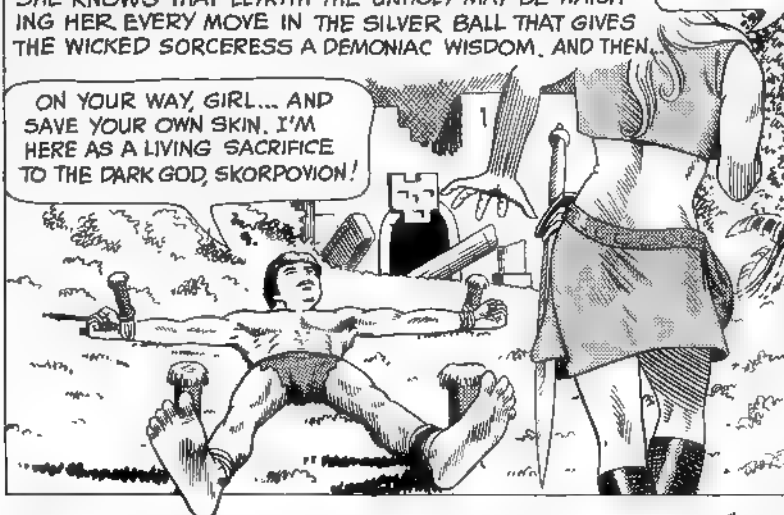
AMAZONIA BREAKS CLEAR OF THE DREAD FOREST, YET STILL SHE GALLOPS AT BREAKNECK SPEED, FOR WELL SHE KNOWS THAT LLYRITH THE UNHOLY MAY BE WATCHING HER EVERY MOVE IN THE SILVER BALL THAT GIVES THE WICKED SORCERESS A DEMONIC WISDOM. AND THEN...

ON YOUR WAY, GIRL... AND SAVE YOUR OWN SKIN. I'M HERE AS A LIVING SACRIFICE TO THE DARK GOD, SKORPOVION!

TANIT'S TEETH...! WHAT'S THIS?

CRAVE YOU DEATH SO MUCH?

NOT I! BUT SKORPOVION IS A GREEDY GOD! INSTEAD OF JUST ME... HE'LL TAKE US BOTH. LISTEN!!!



EVEN NOW... THE DARK GOD STIRS!

AYE! AND CLAMPS HIS HOLD ON US. I FEEL IT... LIKE A HAND ABOUT ME, DRAWING ME FORWARD!

IN THE DARK CRYPTS OF THIS ANCIENT, ABANDONED FANE TO SKORPOVION, SOMETHING EVIL, SOMETHING WICKED WRITHES TO LIFE...

IT PULLS US TOWARD IT... TO BE EATEN IN SOME FOUL MANNER! GIRL--BREAK FREE IF YOU CAN AND-- FLEE!

TANIT AID ME! IT DRAWS ME TOO!



THE SWORD-MAID STRUGGLES, VEINS THROBBING, MUSCLES STRUTTED WITH EFFORT. YET ALWAYS THE LURE OF CHARNEL GOD SUMMONS...

MY SWORDARM... LIMP! I CANNOT... LIFT IT!



A SULLEN RAGE GATHERS IN THE GIRL BARBARIAN! THE PRIDE OF HIS ANCESTORS... KING AND WARRIORS ALL!... STORMS IN HER HEART, SHE FREES HERSELF OF HER THRALLDOM AND...

MY THANKS, TANIT!
AT LEAST, I'LL GO
DOWN FIGHTING...!



SHE SEES THAT BLADE MELT INTO DROPS OF MOLTEN METAL! FOR WHAT SKORPOVION ABSORBS... PERISHES FOREVER IN HIS PUTRID SLIME...

AIE! I'M
DONE FOR!



OHhhh

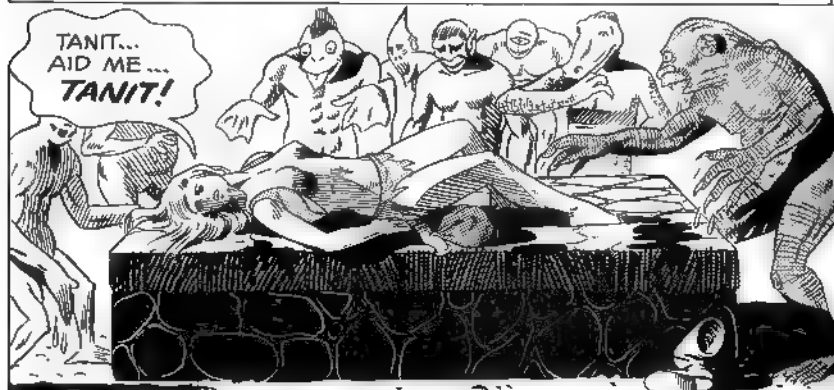


THE CHARNEL GOD LIFTS UPWARD... A SLIME-SLICK PAW ON THE GIRL BARBARIAN, DRIVING HER BACKWARD ACROSS THE STONE ALTAR, ON WHICH, IN OTHER TIMES, MEN AND WOMEN HAVE BEEN SUCKED INTO DREAD OBLIVION...

A ROTTING JAW GAPES WIDE! AWFUL EYES BLAZE WITH THE MADDENED NEED TO FEED! A REEKING BREATH CHOKES THE FRENZIEDLY FIGHTING SWORD-MAIDEN AS SKORPOZION LOWERS ITS PUTRESCENT HEAD...

HER HAND STABS THE AIR, SEEKING A WEAPON... BUT WEAPON THERE IS NONE! YET STILL THOSE QUIVERING FINGERS QUEST....

TANIT...
AID ME...
TANIT!



AIEEEEE



AIE! CALL ON THE LOVE GODDESS OR KARKASSONE, AMAZONIA! FOR NO ONE CAN HELP YOU NOW, THE DARK GOD FEASTS ON THE VITAL LIFE FORCE IN ALL THINGS AND NONE HAS EVER BEFORE ESCAPED THE CLUTCH OF ITS DECAYING PAWS!

IN THOSE LAST DESPERATE MOMENTS BEFORE DEATH, THE WISE MEN TELL US THAT OUR ENTIRE LIFE IS SPREAD BEFORE OUR MIND... AND THUS, IN HER BENUMBED BRAIN, AMAZONIA SEES ONCE MORE THOSE EARLY YEARS OF HER GIRLHOOD WHEN THE NECROMANCER DYZLANN WAS HER ONLY FRIEND...

SOME DAY YOU WILL ASSUME THE THRONE THAT IS YOURS, LITTLE ONE!

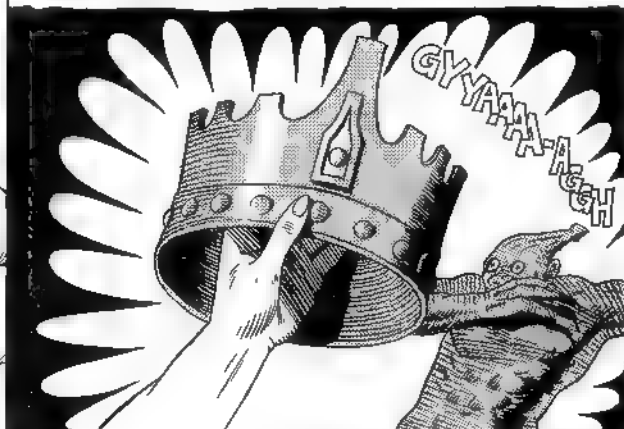
AS SHE GREW OLDER AND MORE LOVELY, WANDERING MERCENARIES AND MEN-AT-ARMS TAUGHT HER THE ARTS OF SWORDSMANSHIP. IN THE RINGING OF OF THE BLADES, AMAZONIA HEARD HER HEART SING WILDLY, IN ECHOED UNISON WITH THOSE OF HER WARRIORS' FOREFATHERS...



BUT THESE DREAM-FRAGMENTS FADE... AS HER SWORD-FINGERS LOCK ON COLD IRON DEEP WITHIN THE LEATHER SACK SHE CARRIES AT HER BELT...

THE IRON CROWN OF KARKASSONE!

UP COMES THAT ROYAL CIRCLET! DOWN ACROSS THE GAPING MAW SHE SLAMS IT! A HISS OF BURNING DEMON-FLESH SEARS THE STILLNESS OF THAT CHARNEL CHAPEL... AND IS ECHOED BY AN AGONIZED SCREAM BUBBLING UPWARD OUT OF THAT FETID THROAT!....



FLY, FELLOW! BEFORE SKORPOVION RECOVERS!

RUN, MAN! TRUE IRON... UNLIKE THE STEEL OF MY SWORD... HAS THE MAGIC POWER OF BURNING DEMON-FLESH ON CONTACT... BUT I CAN'T SAY HOW LONG THE HURT MAY LAST.



SIDE BY SIDE THE GIRL AND THE MERCENARY FROM DISTANT PARPHAR RACE FROM THE FANS OF THE FOUL FIEND. WITHOUT WEAPONS, THEY CANNOT LAST LONG IN KARKASSONE, FOR THERE ARE MANY EVILS IN THIS LAND, AND DEATH IS ONLY ONE OF THEM!

THESE IMPS AND FAMILIARS WERE SUMMONED UP BY SKOR POVION! WOULD I HAD A SWORD!

THERE IS A SWORD I KNOW OF... NOT TOO FAR AWAY! BUT NONE CAN EVER REACH IT... IT IS CALLED...

EXCALIFER THE ENCHANTED! A BLADE TO THRALL THE HEART OF FIGHTING MAN... OR MAID! LONG CENTURIES AGO IT FELL FROM OUT THE SKY. EVER SINCE, IT HAS BEEN GUARDED BY STARVING SAURIANS DWELLING IN PANDEMONIAC POOL...

MAKKAR! MY FINGERS ITCH TO HOLD THAT LOVELY HILT! I MUST HAVE IT!

BUT THE POOL BEINGS!

HERE WERE LIGHTNING BLASTED THIS OLD OAK BRANCH LEANS OUT ABOVE THE WATER. IF THE BRANCH WILL SUPPORT ME...

EXCALIFER-- IS MINE!

IN HER REDSTONE TOWER, WITHIN KARKASSONE CITY, WHERE SHE IS WONT TO SCAN HER WORLD INSIDE THE SILVER BALL NAMED VYS, THE EYES OF LLYRITH THE UNHOLY WIDEN IN DISMAY...

HERMOTIMOS! I LIKE NOT WHAT VYS SHOWS ME--A GIRL BARBARIAN WITH THE SWORD EXCALIFER!

I MUST CALL ON THE DEMON WORLD FOR HELP!

WITHIN THE PROTECTIVE CONFINES OF A PENTAGRAM, LLYRITH WAILS OUT HER EVILS ENCHATMENTS!



DWELLERS IN DAEEMONIA NEED MY PRAYERS! SEND ME ONE WHO SHALL BE NAMELESS TO BAR THE PATH OF THE MAIDEN NAMED AMAZONIA FROM THIS THE CITY I RULE HERMOTIMOS!

BEFORE THE OPEN CITY GATES, THE ROAD SHUDDERS, CRUMBLES UPWARD AS.

AMAZONIA—
BEWARE!

AT LEAST, LLYRITH FEARS ME,
WHICH IS GOOD NEWS! OR..
IS IT?



THE GIRL BARBARIAN FLASHES THE BLADE OF EXCALIFER IN DEMONIC MEAT! THE BEING FROM BEYOND THE BOUNDARIES OF SPACE HOWLS... YET REACHES OUT TO CLUTCH AND HOLD!

I HURT IT...
AYE!-- BUT
NOT ENOUGH!



SHE IS DRAGGED DOWNWARD TOWARD THAT STAMING FIB SURE IN THE GROUND OUT OF WHICH THE DEMON CAME! YET SHE STILL FIGHTS... DRAGGING HER BLADE SIDWAYS...



I HAVE ONE
SLIM CHANCE.
BEFORE IT DRAGS
ME INTO ITS
NETHER WORLD!

THANKS TO TANIT... EXCALIFER'S
STEEL IS NOT ORDINARY STEEL
THAT WILL MELT IN DEMON
FLESH! I BLIND IT WITH
ITS EDGE!



LIKE A STRIKING PANTHER, THE SWORD-MAIDEN LUNGES FIERCELY, NOW EXCALIFER BITES DEEP...DEEP!



BACK TO YOUR DEMON LANDS, WHATEVER YOU ARE!

HER WAY LIES OPEN! THE MEN AND WOMEN OF KARKASSONE CITY STARE WITH TEARS IN THEIR EYES, FOR THEY KNOW THE OLD LEGEND OF A SWORD-MAIDEN WHO SHALL CARRY THE IRON CROWN.



SHE COMES... AT LAST!

MAY THE GODS GRANT... THE OLD LEGENDS SPEAK A TRUE PROPHECY!

SAVAGELY SHE RAMS THAT IRON CROWN UPON THE HEAD OF THE USURPER, AND AS SHE DOES... THE FACE BELOW IT LIQUIFIES, CHANGES SHAPE AND FEATURES...



HIS FACE CONTORTS... ALTERS STRANGELY! CAN THE IRON IN THIS CROWN BE WASHING AWAY A CANTRAI PAL SPELL?

NOW BLESS YOU FOR THIS, AMAZONIA! YOU SEE... I AM FEDRIK!

TO THE THRONE ROOM SHE STRIDES. ON THAT THRONE, CARELESS BEFORE HIS FATE, SITS HERMOTIMOS THE HATEFUL, EYES FILLED WITH DREAD... BUT ALSO WITH AN ODD EAGERNESS AND HOPE...



I BRING THE GIFT OF THE ELDER GODS, HERMOTIMOS!

GRIEVE NOT! YOU BROUGHT AN END TO MY SUFFERING, FOR I WAS A MERE PAWN TO LLYRITH WHO LUSTED AFTER POWER AND WEALTH.

FATHER!

I DIE PEACEFULLY, THANKS TO MY OWN DAUGHTER. YET WHEN YOU WEAR MY CROWN, 'WARE THE SORCERESS! SHE MAY COME BACK...



... SOME DAY... FOR THE THRONE SHE NOW CONSIDERS HER OWN...

THE END

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THE MIGHTY THOR



Thor, the Norse thundergod, recently had to take an elevator to the top of a midtown skyscraper before he could fly off to Asgard to stop a rampaging witchdoctor — because a cop wouldn't let Thor whirl his magic hammer on a crowded street. A woman in the elevator looked at Thor's shoulder-length blond curls and mused, "That REMINDS me—I'm due for a PERMANENT of noon."

BORIS KARLOFF'S TALES OF THE FRIGHTENED



Do not be afraid. Boris Karloff is here to light your way down the dark, shuddering corridors of blood-chilling suspense. Come in, if you dare. Watch out for trap doors. And, oh yes, please close them behind you when you leave. And watch out for Boris!

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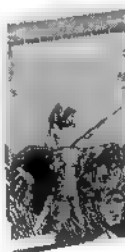
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Stories of the young manhood of Tarzan which return to the time when even Tarzan comes close to death in learning Jungle Craft.

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The veneer of civilization is stripped from Tarzan when he seeks vengeance on those who destroyed his home and abducted his wife.

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TARZAN AND THE GOLDEN LION #9



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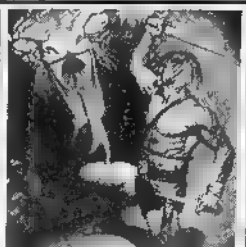
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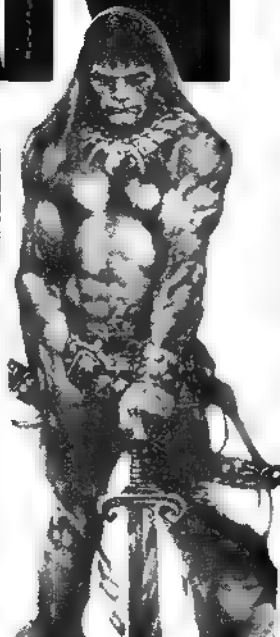
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EERIE FAN FARE

Before getting down to business this month, I think we should explain some of the odd goings-on in our last FAN FARE (issue #26).

It all started with the letters page. Rick Norcross, of Napa, Cal., had asked how vampires and werewolves could engage in mortal combat when only a stake through the heart can kill a vampire and silver bullets a werewolf. By way of illustration, we included a picture of the Wolfman that should have had a caption saying "Nothing but silver bullets can kill this man..." Next to it was a picture of Dracula. The caption under it should have said, "... Then why is this man smiling?"

The pictures were there as planned. But the captions appeared on the FAN FARE page between two drawings by Steven Muhmel of Rapid City, S.D.

It should never have happened. But it did. The question is "why?"

Igor, our makeup editor, says that when he finished working on that issue, all the captions and pictures were where they belonged. But he finished it very late one night and the printer didn't pick it up until the next morning.

Now, I don't want to name names, but there's a certain young lady who's new around here who has been seen skulking around the Warren Publishing offices very late at night. I don't think she's clever enough for a trick like that, but she may have had outside help.

I will not take this lying down! This is to inform that young lady that nobody, but nobody, ever puts one over on Cousin Eerie. I'm biding my time for now. But one day soon, I shall get my revenge! So there, Miss Vampirella.

And now for some pleasant business. Lately we've been telling you about the life and work of some of our artists and writers. This month we've got some little-known facts on a man who claims to be three different people (but who didn't send us a picture of any of them!)...

NEAL ADAMS

Neal Adams isn't really three different people, but it

does seem that way.

He was born on Governor's Island, which is located in the middle of New York harbor. He says he was in third grade when the split from one to three actually occurred.

The first Neal Adams is a very studious, quiet individual. He is mainly interested in science, literature, things like that.

The second Neal Adams, on the other hand, hates to study. All he ever liked to do was draw pictures. When he was a kid, his parents used to worry about all those nights when he'd get out of bed to draw cartoons until dawn. Sometimes they caught him and sent him back to bed sooner, but not often. This same Neal Adams would go into fits of ecstasy when in the presence of a "Prince Valiant" Sunday page, or a Tor comic book or a Stan Drake promotion for his strip, "The Heart of Juliette Jones."

The third Neal Adams is a sneaky guy. He knew all along that the real road to success was through illustration and writing. And toward this end he applied himself. He studied carefully the work of such artists as Austin Briggs, Berne Fuchs, Al Parker, Bob Peake. He wrote as much as he could. Always striving to express himself without making the usual elementary boo boos.

Neal's biggest problem is that there are not enough hours in the day. Even for three people. Or rather, especially for three people. The first Neal Adams spends as much time as possible studying and absorbing all he can. But his activities are limited to supplying the right words for people who forget the "right expression" while in the middle of sentences. And to supplying ideas to a few advertising agencies around New York.

The second Neal Adams is happily supplying comic book material to National Comics and Marvel Comics. And when he's happiest, supplying illustrations for the more sophisticated magazines like EERIE.

The third Neal Adams occasionally writes comic book continuities. But he spends most of his time working in

advertising (with all those other sneaky guys). He creates storyboards for television, finished ads and rough comprehensives for magazines and newspapers. He also has produced illustrations in full color and black and white for several big advertisers.

All three Neal Adams have one dream. They'd like to see the comic medium reach a point where all three of them can get together on one project that can be satisfying to each of them.

POETRY CORNER

Among the stories, pictures and other trash we've been getting for this page, we've found at least three readers who are pretty good poets! I think you'll agree...

THE RIVALRY

by Brad Linaweaver

Uncle Creepy,
gaunt and bald,
An old timer, often mauled,
Much longer has he been
at work,
That Cousin Eerie,
who works unshirked,
Continues to out show
the elder's grue,
No matter how loud Creepy
yells BOO!
Uncle Creepy may have been
number one.
Uncle Creepy may have
a longer run
He may have stories longer
in the vat,
But it's Eerie who has
the established fat!

LITTLE MISS MUFFET

by Gary Schnoebelen

Little Miss Muffet
Sat on her tuffet
A very unwise thing to do.
For Dracula spied her,
and sat down beside her.
Now Muffet's a vampire, too.

DRACULA STRIKES AGAIN

by Cathy Hill

On one cold night
about a year ago,
The air was chilled, the
ground white with snow.
A lone figure, black in dress,
anxiously stalked its prey,
While a girl nearby on the
cold ground lay.
A victim of terror and
horrid anguish,
A victim of the merciless

fiendish,
The lone figure walked
on still,
For his name would up your
spine send a chill!
His name was feared
throughout the land.
Especially when he was
close at hand.
Surely he would very soon
leave,
For each night he watched
anxiously the moon!
The girl was found on the
very next day.
The description of her
I'll give if I may.
Blonde hair, blue eyes,
age: twenty-one.
And in her red cloak,
a silver coin.
Smart detectives
and snoopy spies,
Worked next night
from dusk to sunrise.
But not a clue could be found
for days,
Though the police tried
a hundred million ways.
Transylvania was the place,
Tragic to the human race.
The screams of horror
issued there,
Would on end stand
human hair.
One night, in the morgue,
a doctor roared:
"Look! At her neck!
That tiny mark!"
Further investigation
revealed two.
A spy said, "I've heard
of a beast,
I think at least,
That can bite a human neck,
And can kill. Or leave
a nervous wreck."
Then one night the beast
was caught.
It was hard work,
for how he fought!
A silver crucifix touched
his poor head.
He fell in a faint as if
he were dead.
Then one final gruesome
task,
And the job would be
finished at last!
A sharpened stake
into his heart,
Would be forever from blood
lust part?
Only precious time will tell,
Yet in the town
now all is well.
With no demon's brain
within his head,
Dracula is gone as king
of the living dead,

The poets who sent us
these gems were Brad Linaweaver, of Apopka, Fla., a

young man who knows what he's talking about; Gary Schnoebelen of Elkton, Ore., who neglected to tell us what a tuffet is; and Cathy Hill, of Snow Hill, N.C., who says she thinks we're "super (-natural)."

You never know what our FAN FARE mail is going to bring. It's full of surprises. Like this story from Allen Arnold of Wakefield, R.I. Even the title is surprising!

SURPRISE by Allen Arnold

The night raged on forever. Or so it seemed to Harry as he plodded his way through the dark, dripping forest toward the fabled old Slater mansion. Ponderous trees seemed to close in on him. The tangle of vines clawed at his feet. Tree branches slapped time and time again at his battered and bruised face. Yet Harry determinedly pressed on. He was anxious, yet fearful to learn what lay in wait for him at the end of this dreamlike journey.

Harry's thoughts leaped back to the week before. His brother had brought the mysterious telegram summoning him to this ghastly, eerie region far up in the dismal mountains more than a hundred miles from the city. That telegram! How he pondered over and over. Yet the secret of its meaning would not reveal itself to him. Harry knew only that he must, indeed could not avoid, answer its authoritative summons. A summons, he somehow knew, was leading him toward some dark foreboding destiny.

A vast silence lay over this terrible dark land. Only the constant drip, drip from the trees, his own labored breathing and the soft "slurrp" of his shoes as he pulled them from the clinging mud underfoot interrupted the silence.

The old Slater mansion lay somewhere in the darkness ahead. Soon he would arrive in the clearing described in the telegram that had arrived what seemed millions of years ago. The telegram! Despite the strange feeling that something was terribly wrong, it compelled Harry to continue trudging onward.

Suddenly, in a rush of wet spider webs and swaying tree branches, Harry broke out of the dismal forest. He had reached his goal at last. The pale moon shone dimly through the fleeting clouds onto an almost indesirable pile of stone towers, gables, broken cornices and rambling old porches. The evil history of this accursed place lay thick and heavy upon it. The

brooding old mansion seemed somehow to be waiting for Harry.

For a fleeting instant, Harry thought of his car. He had left it at least three miles away on a lonely, deserted gravel road. Just as the telegram had described, the expected path was there. And just as the telegram had demanded, he followed it to this God-forsaken place of decaying wood and ancient crumbling stone.

With a sickness in his soul, and fear in his heart Harry inched his trembling way forward his rendezvous with whatever nameless destiny awaited him in his forbidding place. Somewhere, far off in the distance, a complaining owl hooted his disappointment at missing out on some furry prey. Silently a cloud passed in front of the moon. Harry shivered in his fright and loneliness.

Hesitantly, he placed his quaking foot onto the creaking, complaining porch. He froze there for a moment, every nerve in his body a quiver. Then a second, slow tentative step. Another creak from the decaying wood. The blood in Harry's veins turned to icewater. Then, a strange sound echoed through the depths of the darkened old house. Ancient, ragged curtains swayed gently in a breeze through a broken window near the porch. Was it just a breeze? Perhaps. But it sent a quick pulse of goose flesh up Harry's spine. Another step. Then another. And yet another. Harry was almost to the door. Near enough to see that it was hanging open on broken hinges.

He pushed it open further. His very soul was trembling. His legs felt like rubber. What would he find in the darkness beyond?

Suddenly, a million bright lights flashed in Harry's face. Then a sound of rau-



DALE STUCKERT of Wickliffe, Ohio drew this odd-looking fellow for us. He didn't say whether he had run into a creature like this while on his way to a birthday party. But you never know.



HERE'S A FAMILAR FACE! It was (as they say in the trade) "executed" by Mark Sandnes of New Cumberland, Pa. We haven't seen this kindly old fellow outside the pages of **FAMOUS MONSTERS** in a long long time. Frankly, we've missed him!

cous laughter. A rush of sudden warmth. Over the din, he heard a song being sung. "Happy birthday to you," they sang. Harry was among friends!

It was too much. Harry clutched his tortured chest. His breath came faster and faster. His face turned deathly white. Within moments, Harry was far beyond any mortal help. He collapsed like some rag doll. Harry's heart, never too strong just couldn't stand the shock of this, his very last surprise birthday party.

Poor Harry! Shows what can happen when you let your imagination get the best of you. He probably expected to run into something like this in that old house . . .

A nice young girl named Susan Wylie, who lives in Raynham, Mass., wrote to say that she is very interested in demonology. Especially vampirism. She threatened to put a curse on your old cousin if we didn't start having more stories on those subjects. To avoid her curse, we'll start with a story Susan wrote herself . . .

THE FOREWARNED by Susan Wylie

The driver had driven much too fast. In fact, he always drove too fast. But this morning was different. He had driven more than 80 miles an hour down that narrow country road.

The morning had started off very clear and bright. It was late September, so the birds had already started their annual trek southward.

The bus was late again. But Paula didn't think there was anything unusual about that. It often was late. It really didn't matter anyway. She would go back home if it didn't come soon. But finally it did come. A little later, a little faster than usual.

Paula climbed aboard and the bus started with a lurch. The driver was out to make up for lost time. His job was at stake. Suddenly, out of nowhere, a big trailer truck spun into view. Then a crash. The tinkle of broken glass. Then silence. All were dead. All save Paula. She just dusted herself off and began to walk toward home.

"Paula, are you all right?" A tall, thin man walked up to her and sadly shook his head as he surveyed the wreckage. "We were warned that things like this might happen," he said, "When the doctor treated you for vampirism, he said that we wouldn't have to drink blood to survive. But there was nothing he could do to help us die by ordinary means."

WE'VE STILL GOT A MYSTERY on our hands. In Issue 26, we showed you a picture of a girl who went to a party dressed as an **EERIE** cover girl. But nobody knows who she is. Do you know? Let us hear from you!

And don't forget to send us your **FANFARE** creations! Address them to, **EERIE FANFARE**, 22 E. 42d Street, New York, N.Y. 10017



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MAIL COUPON TODAY—WHILE THEY LAST!

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☐ I enclose \$. for back issues.

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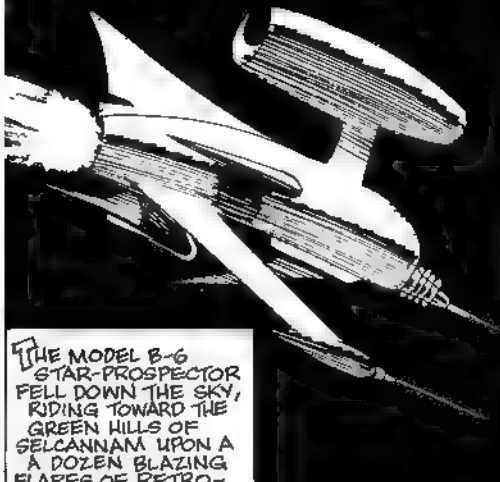
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TIRED OF EARTHLY
WANT SOMETHING
DIFFERENT?...OUT
OF THIS WORLD?
THEN READ ON,
RECKLESS READER
AND SEE HOW MURRAY
ROCHE MAKES OUT AS-


THE MACHINE GODS SLAVE



THE MODEL B-6
STAR-PROSPECTOR
FELL DOWN THE SKY,
RIDING TOWARD THE
GREEN HILLS OF
SELCONNAM UPON A
DOZEN BLAZING
FLARES OF RETRO-
ENERGY! SOON THE
DELAPIDATED CRAFT
WOULD COME TO A
LANDING, THE FIRST SHIP FROM EARTH
TO VISIT THE ANCIENT PLANET...




THE SHIP'S LOCK
HISSED OPEN...




SELCONNAM! I'VE DREAMED
OF THIS EVER SINCE I STOLE
THE PROBE TAPES FROM THE
DEPARTMENT OF STELLAR
EXPLORATION. NOW I'M HERE
AND IT'S MINE!

ERNIE



IF THE PROBE TAPES ARE CORRECT,
I'LL LEAVE HERE RICH! IT'LL BE
MURRAY ROCHE, MULTIMILLIONAIRE,
INSTEAD OF NOBODY ROCHE,
EXPLORATIONS OFFICE CLERK!



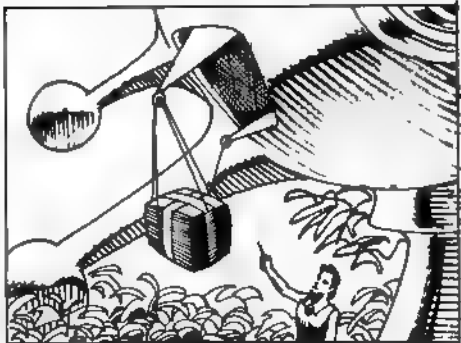
MURRAY ROCHE WAITED IMPATIENTLY WHILE
THE SHIP'S ANALYZERS CHECKED SEL-
CONNAM'S ATMOSPHERE AND MADE APPRO-
PRIATE ADJUSTMENTS....

THE TAPES FROM THE UNMANNED PROBE HAD REVEALED TO MURRAY THAT SELCANNAM WAS INHABITED! THE NATIVES APPEARED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY....



THEY SEEM HARMLESS ENOUGH...

...BY AWING THEM WITH A FEW SIMPLE TRICKS, I'LL HAVE THEM EATING OUT OF MY HAND!



MURRAY'S TRICKS WERE VERY SUCCESSFUL. WITHIN WEEKS, THE STORAGE BAYS OF HIS SHIP WERE FILLED WITH ALL KINDS OF TREASURE! QUITE MYSTERIOUS....

PLATINUM UTENSILS... MACHINED ARTIFACTS... THESE SAVAGES DIDN'T MAKE THIS STUFF - YET THE PROBE INDICATED NO HIGHER CIVILIZATION!



M. ROCHE

WHERE DID YOUR PEOPLE GET THESE THINGS, OLD PRIEST?

EVEN A MAN WHO HAS WALKED DOWN FROM THE STARS MAY NOT BE TOLD THAT!



BUT MURRAY'S GREED AND CURIOSITY HAD GROWN -

LOOK, YOU DECREPIT BONE RACK! I DIDN'T COME HALF WAY ACROSS THE GALAXY TO BE FED SUPERSTITIOUS BUNK!!



TAKE CARE! THE MACHINE GOD FORBIDS ME TO SPEAK!



AND I COMMAND YOU TO ANSWER ME!

NEVER! NO ONE MAY KNOW THE SECRETS OF THE MACHINE GOD-KK-KG.

DRIVEN BY GREED AND ANGER, MURRAY SQUEEZES UNTIL...

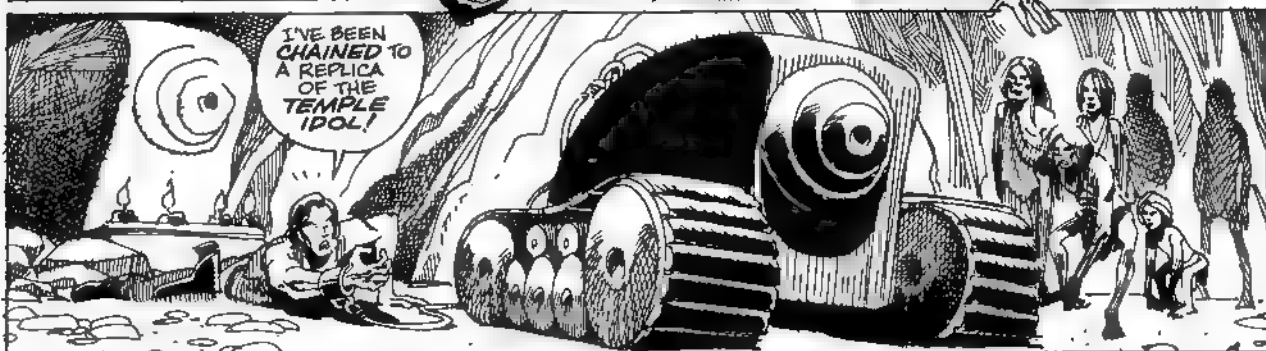


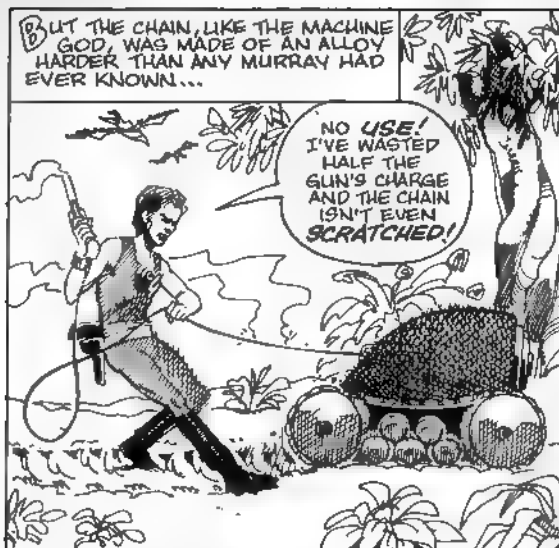
DEAD! I'VE KILLED THE OLD FOOL!

MURRAY FLED THROUGH THE SHADOW-HAUNTED TEMPLE, UNTIL -



FINALLY, MURRAY REGAINED CONSCIOUSNESS TO DISCOVER....





BLEEDING AND BRUISED, MURRAY
D AWOKE FROM DELIRIUM....

MY HEAD—LIKE IT'S—ABOUT
TO BURST... CAN'T—
REMEMBER—BUT SOMEHOW—
I MADE IT OVER THE—
—MOUNTAINS....

BUT MURRAY'S
TROUBLES HAVE
JUST STARTED...

A CARNIVORE!
AND I'M SUPPOSED
TO BE LUNCH!

HISS--AARH!

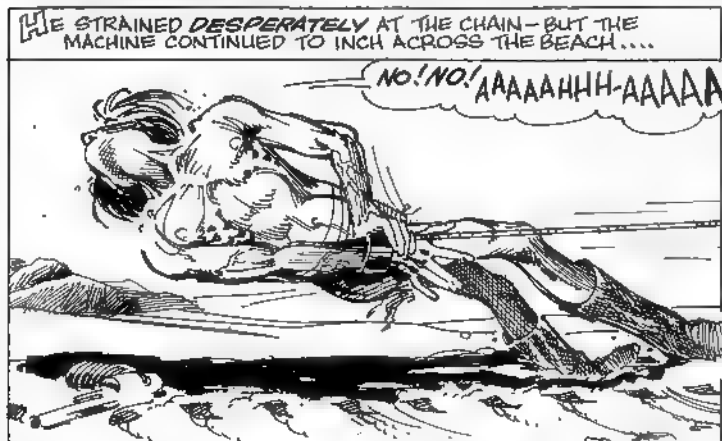
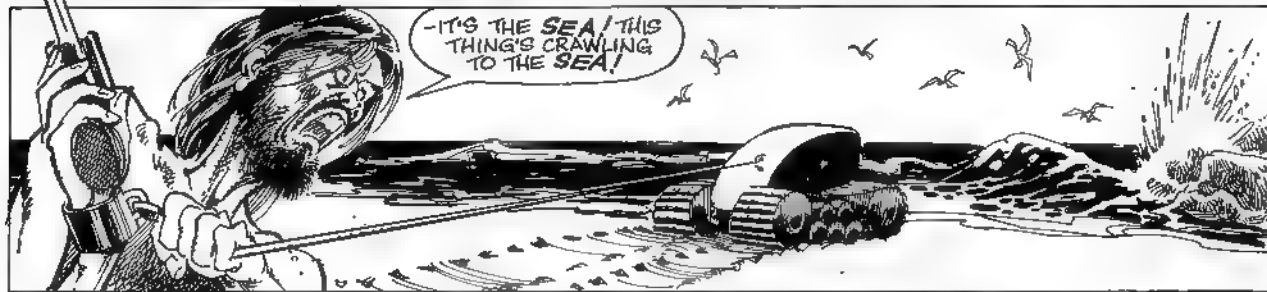
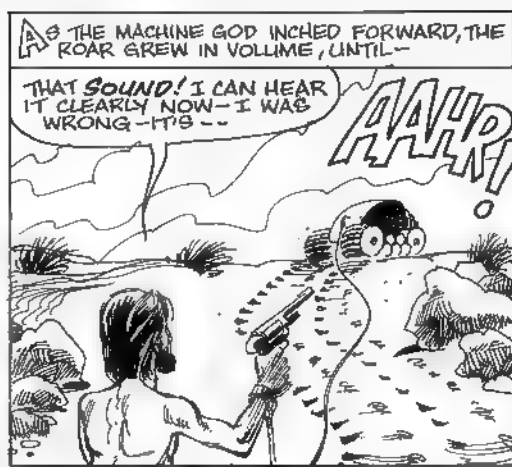
WONG!

WHEN! THE MACHINE
—GOD ALMOST LOST A—
—SLAVE THAT-TIME...

MURRAY LAPPED BACK
INTO UNCONSCIOUSNESS.
WHEN HE AWOKE....

THE GUN! I
DROPPED IT!

I—I MUST GET IT—
IT'S THE—ONLY
THING BETWEEN ME—
—AND THOSE—
—MAN-EATERS!



REV UP YOUR **RETRO ROCKETS** AND UNZIP YOUR **EYE SOCKETS**, **ASTEROID ADDICTS!** WHILE YOUR ORBS ORBIT THIS GORE BIT... I'LL SERVE UP AN **OPTIC OMELET** THAT'S SURE TO GIVE YOUR VISION INDIGESTION. THIS **GALAXY GIBLET** WILL HAVE YOU AGOG, WHEN YOU LEARN WHY THIS **STAR SHIP** GETS...

...AND BEYOND, A
UNIVERSE REDUCED TO
THE EQUATIONS OF MAN-
KIND, TOO SMALL TO ANSWER
HIS CURIOSITY, TOO ENDLESS
TO BE EXPLAINED, STRETCHED
INTO PERPETUAL EMPTI-
NESS-THE PEOPLE OF
EARTH HAD COME
TO FIND THE THRESH-
OLD OF THEIR
EXISTENCE!

TO THINK
THE **ANSWER**
AWAITS THE
FIVE OF US!

CREATION!
THE ORIGIN
OF OUR VERY
BEGINNING...

...THERE, IN
THAT **VACUUM**
SOMEWHERE!

TOM SUTTON '89

ALL THAT OUT THERE,
WILL SOON BELONG TO
US! MAN WAS **MEANT**
TO RULE THE UNIVERSE!

IT'S **FRIGHTENING**
SOMETIMES, WONDER-
ING **WHAT** WE'LL FIND
AT THE **END** OF OUR
JOURNEY!

PERHAPS WE'D BE BETTER OFF **NOT**
FINDING OUT, LAURA, THIS TIME,
WE'RE TAMPERING WITH **MORE**
THAN JUST SCIENCE,

CAN WE **FORGET** OUR LAST CATASTROPHE?
WE **DEFINED** OUR IGNORANCE THEN,
IN TERMS OF PROGRESS, WE
REFUSED TO BELIEVE THAT
WISDOM COULD REPLACE
INTELLIGENCE

WE USED THAT PROGRESS AGAINST OUR OWN
WORLD WASTING IT ON **ATOMIC MURDER**
THAT LEFT ONLY THE RUBBLE OF OUR
INSANITY.

AND SO, WE ALLOWED OUR
KNOWLEDGE TO GUIDE US
INTO **MYSTERY**, ALMOST
DESTROYING **MANKIND**
IN THE PROCESS!

WE HAD
PAID FOR
OUR MISTAKES,
AND QUICKLY
FORGOT THEM!

TIME ERASED THE PAIN,
AND ONCE AGAIN, WE
EVOLVED... TO QUESTION...
TO **DISCOVER!**

TO DESTROY?

CAPTAIN! THE
SHIP IS APPROACHING
OUR FIRST EQUATORIAL
RENDENVOUS!

I AM PREPARING
TO APPLY QUOTIENT
ONE TO PHASE
ONE...

DONE!

GOOD WORK,
MR. PORTZ!

THE INITIAL
LINK TO OUR
ANSWER HAS
BEEN ESTABLISHED!

STAND
BY!

AND WHEN WE'VE SOLVED
THE RIDDLE, WILL WE BE
READY FOR THE
RESPONSIBILITY?

CAPTAIN, HE'S GONE!
ENGINEER PORTZ
HAS VANISHED!

WHAT'S
HAPPENING?



**SPACE
STORM!**

WE'VE GOT TO
STABILIZE OUR
POSITION BEFORE
WE REACH CHECK-
POINT, PHASE TWO!

SERGEANT
MYRLON
QUICKLY...



... KEEP OUR FLIGHT
PATTERN **CONSTANT**
WHILE I LOCK IN THE
RELATIVITY PATTERN
ON AUTOMATIC.

THAT'S
IT!
GOOD!



SERGEANT
MYRLON...
YOU...
YOU
SEEM
TO
BE...

YOU'RE **RIGHT**
DONNER! IT
KNOWS WE'RE
TRYING TO
FIND OUT!

YOU
CAN'T
GO
ON!

YOU
CAN'T!

CAPTAIN
ANTON!



FIRST **PORTZ**,
AND NOW,
CAPTAIN **ANTON**
AND **MYRLON!**

WE'VE GOT
TO BRING
THEM **BACK**,
DONNER!

HURRY!

I WANT TO CHECK
ALL OUR CALCULATIONS
BEFORE GOING ON!

PLEASE TAKE
A PROXIMITY
READING OF
OUR CLOSEST
GALAXY!

IN PHILOSOPHY,
ONE LEARNS THAT
SUPREMACY CAN
ONLY BE
EXPERIENCED...
ALONE!

PORTZ FULLFILLED
HIS TASK, THUS
ENDING HIS
IMPORTANCE
TO OUR PURPOSE.

WHEN CAPTAIN ANTON
AND SERGEANT
MYRLON FINISHED
THEIRS, THEY WERE
NO LONGER NEEDED.

IT'S AS THOUGH
THE **SECRET**
CAN BE
FOUND
BY
ONLY
ONE
OF
US!

LAURA!

DONNER REALIZED IT WAS TOO
LATE TO **STOP** THE INEVITABLE
SEQUENCE OF HIS FATE, NOW
AS THE SHIP SPUN INTO IMBALANCE,
HE WAS **ALONE!**

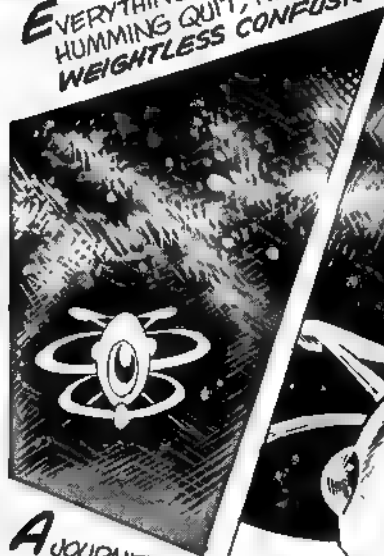
WAAAAA!



IT'S ALMOST
HERE! ALL
AROUND ME...

EVERYTHING WENT **SUSPENDED**... ENGINE
HUMMING QUIT, HE FELT FLUNG INTO
WEIGHTLESS CONFUSION...

...REPLACING IN THEIR
SUBTRACTION WITH
ONLY THE GAPING
SLASHES OF **VOID**.



A JOURNEY
IS ALMOST
OVER, AND
SOMEWHERE
A BILLION
STARS
FLICKERED,
THEN WENT **OUT!**
PLANETS AND SUNS
BLINKED AWAY...


OF COURSE!

HOW ELSE
COULD WE THINK
TO CONTROL THE
UNIVERSE?
UNLESS WE
BECAME IT!







MAN
NEEDED
A REASON
TO EXIST.



HE FOUND
THAT REASON,
HERE, IN THE
STARS OF HIS
UNIVERSE.




AS LONG AS
SOMETHING
REMAINED UNSOLVED,
WE COULD QUESTION
IT. AS LONG AS
SOMETHING DID
NOT BELONG TO
US, WE DESIRED
IT. FOR **MAN**, HIS
INFINITY BECAME
HIS EXCUSE.



UNTIL NOW,
SOLVING THE
ENIGMA OF SUPREMACY,
ITSELF, WE HAVE
REMOVED THE
FINAL FLAW.

**MAN
HAS
BECOME
SUPREME!**



AND HAVING
BECOME **THAT**
WHAT REASON WOULD
HE HAVE, FOR NEED-
ING **ANYTHING**
ELSE?

...the end.



The LIFE BLOOD of any COLLECTION!

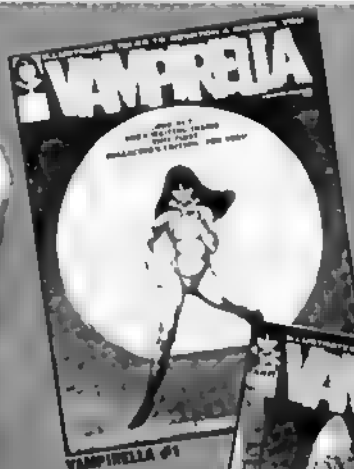


YOU MIGHT HAVE CREEPYS AND EERIES PILED TO THE CEILING! YOU MIGHT EVEN HAVE THE ISSUE NUMBER ONE OF THE GYPSY GAZETTE! BUT YOUR COLLECTION ISN'T COMPLETE AT ALL WITHOUT EVERY ISSUE OF **VAMPIRELLA**!

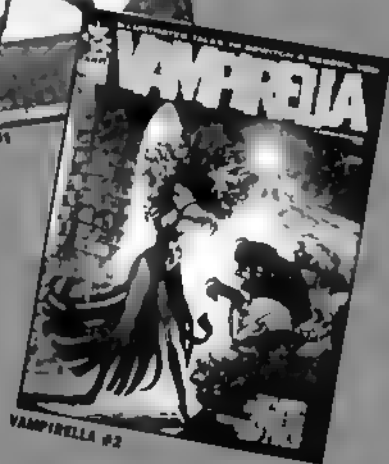
GET WITH IT! GET THE EARLY ISSUES NOW, WHILE IT'S STILL EASY! JUST MAIL THIS COUPON . . .



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VAMPIRELLA #1



VAMPIRELLA #2



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I'D LIKE YOU TO MEET A **BOGEY-BUDDY** OF MINE... DR. LAERNU! LET'S JOIN HIM IN A LITTLE GAME OF **FIND THE FIEND** AS HE FIGURES OUT **WHICH WITCH IS WHICH** IN HIS VERY FIRST STORY! SO PLEASE...

ENTER...DR. LAERNU!

I SWEAR BY **BEELZEBUD** AND **BALTHASAR**, BY ALL THE SPIRITS OF THE **NETHER-WORLD** AND BY MY SHINING BLACK HONOR, TO FIGHT WICKED SPELLS AND BLACK MAGIC WHERE-SO-EVER I SHALL FIND THEM!

HEAR ME, OH DARK ONES! MY CAUSE IS JUST, BY EVIL LOGIC! FOR I HAVE NOTHING, AND GERDA HAS ALL! GRANT ME THE DARK SPELL I SEEK TO CAST ON HER!



BY SATAN'S COIN, WHICH I HOLD IN MY HAND, LET HER BE AN ANIMAL!... AN ANIMAL WHICH BEFITS HER NATURE!



Dick Piscopo

NEVER HAVE I HAD TO WORK SO LATE AT THE CASTLE BEFORE! DOES NOT THE DUKE REALIZE IT IS UNSAFE TO RETURN HOME TO THE VILLAGE THROUGH THESE WOODS AT NIGHT? WHY DOES HE KEEP ME SO LATE? IF THERE WAS NOT A FAMINE IN THE VILLAGE, I WOULD NOT KEEP THIS JOB... BUT MY SICK PARENTS MUST EAT!



OH, LORD... IT CAN'T BE! NO! NO! EEEEEAAARRRRGH!

GRRROOWWLL

BUT I MUST NOT TARRY IN THE FOREST! ALL THOSE HORRIBLE MURDERS COMMITTED HERE... WITH THE VICTIMS TORN TO SHREDS!... I... I THOUGHT I HEARD SOMETHING BEHIND ME! FOLLOWING!

DING DONG
DING DONG



EH? WHAT'S THAT? **ANOTHER** BRUTAL MURDER? AND AGAIN SO NEAR TO MY CASTLE?

YES, YOUR LORDSHIP! GRETCHEN, THE SERVING GIRL, THIS TIME!



SHOCKING, SHOCKING! GIVES MY CASTLE A BAD NAME! WHY DO ONLY I GET SUCH TROUBLES... WHY NOT SOME OTHER NOBLE? WELL, SOMETHING MUST BE DONE! I HAVE HEARD OF A DOCTOR NAMED LAERNU WHO SOLVES MYSTERIES... EVEN SUPERNATURAL ONES! I DON'T BELIEVE IN MAGIC MYSELF, BUT IT SHOULD BE QUIET THOSE STUPID VILLAGERS AND THEIR WEREWOLF STORIES!

YES, YOUR LORDSHIP! WHAT SHALL I DO?



AWAKE! AWAKE ALL! ANOTHER MURDER HAS BEEN COMMITTED! GRETCHEN, THE SERVING GIRL, LAYS SLAIN AND MUTILATED IN THE WOODS!

DO? DO? WHY, SEND FOR THIS DR. LAERNU, OF COURSE! MUST I EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO YOU, DUNCE? AND GET MY BREAKFAST READY... I'M FAMISHED!



ER... YES, YOUR LORDSHIP!

SCANT HOURS LATER...

I HOPE THIS DOCTOR WILL COME!... BARON BRUNO WILL SKIN ME ALIVE IF HE DOESN'T!



COME IN, GOOD SIR! AND REST EASY, FOR I SHALL RETURN WITH YOU TO SEE BARON BRUNO IMMEDIATELY!

B...BUT...HOW DID YOU KNOW I WAS HERE, AND THAT I AM EMPLOYED BY BARON BRUNO?

I HAVE HEARD OF THE BEASTIAL MURDERS OUTSIDE THE BARON'S CASTLE... AS FOR THE REST; I HAVE CERTAIN ABILITIES OF WHICH MANKIND KNOWS NOTHING! BUT WE WASTE TIME! I'LL GET MY HORSE, AND WE'LL BE OFF!

DR. LAERNU, YOUR LORDSHIP!

HOW DO YOU DO, BARON?

TERRIBLY!... THESE CONFOUNDED MURDERS ARE RUINING MY PEACE OF MIND! ESPECIALLY SO CLOSE TO THE MARRIAGE! YOU MUST CLEAR THEM UP!

OH? IS THERE TO BE A WEDDING IN THE FAMILY SOON?

INDEED! MY ELDEST DAUGHTER, GERDA, IS TO MARRY A RICH AND INFLUENTIAL NOBLE! I AM ANXIOUS THAT THESE PLANS ARE NOT SPOILED! SO THESE MURDERS MUST END! YOU CAN USE YOUR MAGICAL POWERS TO FIND THE KILLER, EH?

I HAVE NO REAL MAGICAL POWERS... THAT IS, I CANNOT CREATE MAGIC OR CAST SPELLS! I AM WHAT YOU MIGHT CALL A "MAGIC DEFLECTOR"... I CAN RE-SHAPE AND BEND OTHER MAGICIANS' SPELLS TO SUIT MY OWN PURPOSES!... BUT WE ARE WASTING TIME! I WISH TO SEE YOUR DAUGHTER GERDA AND THE REST OF YOUR FAMILY IMMEDIATELY!

THERE IS ONLY GERDA, AND MY YOUNGER DAUGHTER, LISA! I'LL FETCH THEM WITHOUT DELAY!

THESE ARE MY DAUGHTERS, GERDA AND LISA!

HELLO!

HOW DO YOU DO?

YOU, GERDA, ARE TO BE MARRIED TO A RICH AND INFLUENTIAL DUKE... AS THE ELDEST CHILD, DO YOU NOT ALSO INHERIT THE TITLE OF BARONESS AT YOUR FATHER'S PASSING?

WHY... YES!

I FAIL TO SEE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT! WHERE HAS IT TO DO WITH THESE MURDERS?

NO! IT DOESN'T BOTHER ME! WHY SHOULD IT! I... I AM PLEASED AT MY SISTER'S GOOD FORTUNE! YOU HAVE TOO MUCH NERVE! YOUR QUESTIONS ARE IMPERTINENT!

YOUR ROOM, SIR!

DINNER WILL BE SERVED SHORTLY, DR. LAERNU, I SUGGEST YOU WASH AND GET READY!

THANK YOU! IT LOOKS QUITE COMFORTABLE!

I'LL ASK THE QUESTIONS HERE!... DOES IT NOT BOTHER YOU, LISA, THAT GERDA NOT ONLY MARRIES WELL NOW BUT ALSO INHERITS THE TITLE IN THE FUTURE?

PERHAPS SO... AT ANY RATE, IT GROWS LATE, AND I AM TIRED! I WISH TO BE SHOWN TO MY ROOM!

NOW LISTEN CAREFULLY... I DON'T TRUST THIS FELLOW, LAERNU. SOMETHING SUSPICIOUS, ALMOST **UNEARTHLY** ABOUT HIM! AFTER WE RETIRE TONIGHT I WANT YOU TO STAND GUARD HERE AND MAKE SURE HE DOES NOT LEAVE HIS ROOM!



LATER THAT NIGHT...

JUST AS I SUSPECTED... THE MURDERER IS ONE OF THE CASTLE RESIDENTS! I MUST GET DOWN THERE AND FIND OUT WHICH!



I MUST HAVE LOST HIM... BUT THAT NOISE BEHIND ME!



GR RROOOWWLL!

CURIOUS CREATURE! HOW INTERESTING... BUT OF COURSE I MUST PROTECT MYSELF! "BY THE SACRED NAME OF BAAL, I TURN THE EVIL SPELL UPON YOU FROM MALICE TO BENIGNITY... GO IN PEACE, CREATURE OF DARKNESS!"



HSS

SS

SS

...AND SO I USE MY ABILITY AS A "MAGIC DEFLECTOR" TO BEND SOMEONE ELSE'S SPELL TO MY OWN ENDS!... JUST AS I THOUGHT, THE ANIMAL RETURNS TO THE CASTLE! WHO'S BEHIND ALL THIS?



I SHALL FIND OUT THIS MYSTERY! EVERYONE AWAKE! COME DOWNSTAIRS! IT IS LAERNU WHO COMMANDS YOU!



BUT... BUT I DID NOT COMMAND YOU TO GUARD OUTSIDE LAERNU'S DOOR, BUTLER?

THIS IS **MOST** IRRESPONSIBLE! I DEMAND AN EXPLANATION!

BUT I DID, SIR... I SWEAR IT! I DON'T KNOW HOW HE COULD HAVE GOTTEN OUT WITHOUT MY SEEING HIM!



I HAVE NO PATIENCE FOR EARTHLY FOOLISHNESS! HOW I GOT OUT OF MY ROOM AND LISA'S INTERRUPTED SLEEP ARE OF NO IMPORTANCE! THE **MURDERER** HAS BEEN LOOSE TONIGHT!

WHAT!??? DO YOU SAY THAT **ANOTHER** MURDER HAS BEEN COMMITTED? THE MARRIAGE WILL BE RUINED!



THERE HAS BEEN NO MURDER... I PREVENTED IT! BUT I MEAN TO SOLVE THE MYSTERY TONIGHT!

THE MURDERER IS IN THIS HOUSE, AND I MEAN TO KNOW WHO! BARON, HAS THIS CASTLE A MAGICIAN'S ROOM?

OF COURSE THERE IS A MAGICIAN'S ROOM... ALL CASTLES HAVE ONE! BUT IT IS SEALED, AND HAS BEEN FOR YEARS! AND I **RESENT** YOUR IDEA THAT THE MURDER IS ONE OF US! IT'S PREPOSTEROUS!



IF YOU WANT YOUR MYSTERY SOLVED, TAKE ME TO THE MAGICIAN'S ROOM AT ONCE! GERDA AND LISA WILL COME, TOO!

ODD... THE SEAL ON THE DOOR HAS BEEN BROKEN!

WHICH MEANS THAT SOMEONE HAS BEEN HERE!

OF COURSE! SOMEONE WHO CAST THE SPELL WHICH FORCED A CAT TO KILL! A **WERE-CAT!**



RIDICULOUS! WERE-CAT INDEED!

QUIET, BARON! YOUR MYSTERY IS SOLVED!... GERDA, YOUR FEET ARE MUDDY! YOU HAVE BEEN IN THE FOREST AND IT WAS YOU WHO ATTACKED ME! YOU ARE THE WERE-CAT MURDERESS!



NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE TRUE! IT CAN'T... *HISsssSssSsSsSs!*



QUICK! HOLD HER AND BIND HER! SHE MUST NOT BE HARMED!

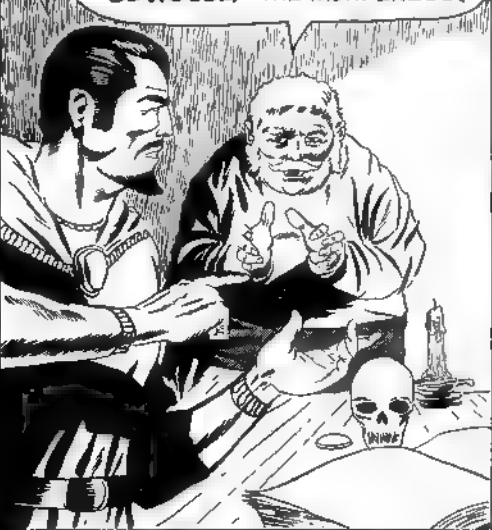
THAT'S RIGHT! GET HER INTO THE CHAIR! LISA, BRING THE ROPE AND BIND HER!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! GERDA HAS ALWAYS BEEN SO GOOD! WHAT MUST BE DONE WITH HER? MUST SHE BE SLAIN?



WHY, **NOTHING** MUST BE DONE TO HER! THIS IS OBVIOUSLY NOT HER FAULT! **ANOTHER PARTY** IS TO BLAME HERE!

WHAT DO YOU MEAN? SHE IS **OBVIOUSLY** THE MURDERESS!



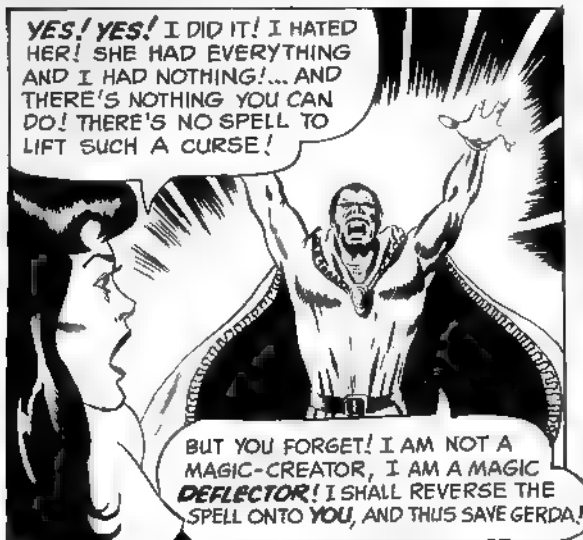
TRUE, BARON! BUT DO YOU THINK SHE CAST SUCH A HIDEOUS SPELL-CURSE UPON **HERSELF?** OF COURSE NOT! THE SPELL WAS CAST ON HER BY SOMEONE ELSE, AND IT IS THAT PERSON WHOM WE SEEK!... THE PERSON WHO USED THIS SATAN'S COIN TO TURN GERDA INTO AN ANIMAL! AND THAT PERSON IS... **LISA!**



RIDICULOUS! YOU HAVE NO REASON FOR SAYING THAT!

AND WHO ELSE HAD REASON TO HATE GERDA? **YOU** WERE JEALOUS OF HER DESIRABLE MARRIAGE! **YOU** WERE RESENTFUL OF HER EVENTUALLY INHERITING THE TITLE OF DUCHESS! SO YOU CAST A SPELL ON HER WHICH TURNED HER INTO THE BEAST MOST RESEMBLING HER CHARACTER! IN THIS CASE, A CAT... A NOBLE ANIMAL!





YES! YES! I DID IT! I HATED HER! SHE HAD EVERYTHING AND I HAD NOTHING!... AND THERE'S NOTHING YOU CAN DO! THERE'S NO SPELL TO LIFT SUCH A CURSE!

BUT YOU FORGET! I AM NOT A MAGIC-CREATOR, I AM A MAGIC DEFLECTOR! I SHALL REVERSE THE SPELL ONTO YOU, AND THUS SAVE GERDA!



BY THE SACRED NAME OF BAAL, I TURN THIS EVIL SPELL TO RELEASE THE SUFFERER AND PLAGUE THE ORIGINATOR, OH UNHOLY SPELL!

GERDA IS SAVED FOREVER, AND—**HO! HO! HO!**—LISA HAS BECOME THE ANIMAL MOST BEFITTING HER CHARACTER... **A FAT SOW!**



BUT LOOK! THE PIG... I MEAN, LISA... IS GETTING AWAY! WE MUST **STOP** HER!

LET HER GO!... I HAVE A HUNCH THAT WITH A FAMINE IN THE VILLAGE, SHE WILL NOT GET FAR... AND IT IS NEARLY DAWN!



LOOK, HANS! A FAT PIG HAS ESCAPED FROM THE BARON'S CASTLE!

AYE, FRITZ! WE ARE NO THIEVES, BUT OUR FAMILIES ARE STARVING! YOU CATCH THE SOW, AND I WILL SLAUGHTER IT!



WE ARE SAVED! HOW CAN WE EVER REWARD YOU? YOU MUST ACCEPT MONEY! MY GRATITUDE KNOWS NO BOUNDARIES!

YES, DR. LAERNU! AND IN THIS TIME OF FAMINE, YOU MUST ACCEPT A GIFT OF MUCH FOOD! AND YOU ARE ALWAYS WELCOME TO DINE HERE!



IT... IT CAN'T BE! HE DISAPPEARED! HE'S GONE! LIKE A GHOST! WHAT WAS HE?



"AS IF HE WAS JUST A DREAM," GERDA SAID, WERE-WATCHERS!... AND MAYBE SO, BECAUSE REMEMBER! LAERNU SPELLED BACKWARDS IS UNREAL!



... HE SAID HE WAS NOT OF OUR FLESH! AS IF HE WAS JUST A DREAM! BUT WHAT- EVER HE WAS, HE WAS **GOOD!**

HA! HA! HA! WHAT NEED HAVE I OF MONEY OR FOOD? I AM NOT OF YOUR FLESH!... I AM FREE AS THE AIR!

PROLOGUE: AS YOU MAY OR MAY NOT KNOW, WEREWOLVES MAKE UP A FASCINATING, THOUGH INFINITESIMAL, PORTION OF THE POPULATION! A CITY OF 50,000 IS LUCKY TO HAVE JUST ONE! THE NORTHWESTERN TOWN OF **BARSTOW, MONTANA** (POP. 11,288) WAS SINGULARLY LUCKY! BARSTOW HAD **NESBIT PEGLER**...

NESBIT REALLY DIDN'T LIKE BEING A WEREWOLF, EVEN IF IT WAS ONLY A ONCE A MONTH AFFAIR...

THE REST OF HIS HITCH HAD BEEN ONE LONG NIGHTMARE ...

HE HAD CONTRACTED THE RARE AFFLICTION WHILE SERVING IN GERMANY! THE HUGE GREY WOLF HAD FALLEN, ITS SKULL CRUSHED BY A DESPERATE BLOW THAT LEFT A BIG DENT IN NESBIT'S SILVER-PLATED BOWLING TROPHY...

PEGLER! WHERE'S PVT. PEGLER?
!#!!#!*!
AWOL AGAIN!

CHANGING FASTER, BUT DON'T DARE GO IN YET!

SOMEHOW, NESBIT MANAGED AN HONORABLE DISCHARGE AND, WITH MUCH RELIEF, RETURNED TO HIS SMALL HOME TOWN IN THE MONTANA MOUNTAINS...

BUT NESBIT DISCOVERED THAT LYCANTHROPY WAS A PROBLEM EVEN IN HIS OWN BACKYARD...

HE REMEMBERED THE NIGHT HE'D FOUND A WAY OVER THE FENCE AND CHASED OLD WIDOW WEEDLEMAN UP A TREE ...

FINALLY, IN DESPERATION, NESBIT BEGAN LOCKING HIMSELF IN HIS CELLAR...

HE HAD TO CONTROL HIS OTHER SELF!

POOR NESBIT!
ON TOP OF
ALL HIS
OTHER
PROBLEMS,

HE
PROBABLY
HAS TO
WATCH
OUT FOR
FLEAS AND
DOGCATCHERS!
BUT JUST
HANG ON
WITH
BAITED
BREATH,
BEASTIES,
AND DON'T
GO
SHEDDING
YOUR FUR
ALL OVER
THE VAULT!
THINGS
ARE GOING
TO GET
WORSE FOR
NESBIT,
<TISK, TISK>
MUCH
WORSE!

MOST OF US DON'T STUFF ANYTHING BUT THE THANKSGIVING TURKEY, BUT NESBIT PEGLER WAS DIFFERENT! BESIDES BEING A LYCANTHROPE, HE WAS A TAXIDERMIST, A GOOD ONE! HE'D STUFFED AND MOUNTED EVERYTHING FROM A PIGEON TO A POLAR BEAR AND, IF A GREEN ZLEP WAS SOMEDAY BROUGHT BACK FROM THE MOON... WELL, HE COULD PROBABLY STUFF THAT, TOO!

SURE, MRS. HOSMER, I CAN
STUFF H.M. FOR YOU, I GUESS!
IT'S JUST THAT I'VE NEVER
STUFFED A FOUR POUND
GOLDFISH, BEFORE!

OH, BLESS YOU, MY BOY!
I HAD POOR ELMO FOR
TEN YEARS! LIKE A SON,
YOU KNOW!

I UNDERSTAND,
MRS. HOSMER! COME
BACK TUESDAY! I'LL
HAVE ELMO ALL
LACQUERED UP AND
FLOATING IN HIS
BOWL, BIG AS LIFE!

BLESS YOU!
SNIFF!

THE TAXIDERMISTRY SHOP PROSPERED...

THE TIME CAME WHEN NESBIT HAD
MORE BUSINESS THAN HE ALONE COULD
HANDLE! HE HIRED AN ASSISTANT, ONE
FELIX KNOX, AN OLD ARMY BUDDY...

EXCELLENT
WORKMANSHIP,
PEGLER!
YOU CAN BE
SURE THE
STATE MUSEUM
WILL BE
SENDING MORE
BUSINESS
YOUR WAY!

THANK YOU,
PROF. HACKWOOD!
I DO TAKE
PRIDE IN
MY WORK!

THAT'S
RIGHT,
FELIX!
DON'T
LET A
SINGLE
BIT OF
STITCHING
SHOW!

SURE,
NES,
SURE!

**ALL
SEWED
UP!**

MONTHS PASSED! NESBIT ACQUIRED A GIRLFRIEND!
THREE MONTHS LATER HE AND ELISSA WERE ENGAGED...

IN THE HAPPY WEEKS THAT FOLLOWED,
NESBIT SOMETIMES FORGOT HE WAS A
LYCANTHROPE, BUT NOT ALWAYS...

OH, IT'S
LOVELY,
NESBIT!

NO MORE
LOVELY THAN
YOU, ELISSA!

YEAH, AND
TOO GOOD
FOR A
BEANPOLE
LIKE YOU!

ISN'T THE
MOON BEAUTI-
FUL TONIGHT,
NESBIT!

I
PREFER
THE
STARS!

I JUST HAD
A FUNNY THOUGHT,
NESBIT! HERE WE
ARE LOVERS AND
WE'VE NEVER
SEEN A FULL
MOON TOGETHER!
WHY DON'T WE-

I TOLD
YOU! I
DON'T LIKE
MOONS!

I'M SORRY,
DARLING!
I JUST...

NEVERMIND! LET'S
TALK ABOUT SOME-
THING ELSE!

HOW
CAN I
TELL
HER?

A WEEK LATER,
THE EVENING
BEFORE THE
FULL MOON,
NESBIT MADE
ANOTHER OF
HIS PERIODIC
DISAPPEARANCES!

NOPE, HAVEN'T SEEN
HIM SINCE CLOSING!
YOU KNOW YOUR
BOYFRIEND...
SECRETIVE AS
A PACK RAT!

NES WON'T SHOW
TONIGHT! YOU CAN
COUNT ON THAT! HOW ABOUT
DINNER, MAYBE A MOVIE? YOU
RATE SOMETHING SPECIAL,
LIKE ME!

ALTHOUGH FELIX HADN'T YET STOLEN NESBIT'S
GIRL, HE'D BEEN HAVING BETTER LUCK WITH
NESBIT'S MONEY! AFTER ELISSA HAD GONE,
HE PULLED THE **BUSINESS LEDGER**, AND MADE
A FEW DEFT ALTERATIONS ...

I'VE TOLD YOU A
DOZEN TIMES, I'M
ENGAGED! IF YOU
MUST PLAY WOLF,
DO IT WITH
SOMEONE ELSE!

THERE!
HA, HA!
THAT POOR
FOOL
NESBIT!

I'M ROBBING HIM
BLIND, AND HE DOESN'T
SUSPECT A THING!

LATER THAT EVENING, THE MOON RISING FULL, FELIX DROVE TOWARD NESBIT'S HOUSE ON THE FAR EDGE OF TOWN...

ELISSA'S SOME GIRL! SHE'D FALL FOR ME IN A MINUTE IF IT WEREN'T FOR THAT WEIRDO NESBIT!

HE'S UP TO SOMETHING IN THAT HOUSE! DISSAPPEARS ONE NIGHT A MONTH, LIKE CLOCKWORK!

IF I CAN FIND OUT WHY, MAYBE IT'LL BE SOMETHING THAT'LL MAKE ELISSA DROP HIM LIKE A HOT POTATO! THEN...

THE ROAD TWISTED, BANKED ALONG A GRADE, THEN...

HOUSE BLACK AS A COFFIN! HE'S EITHER NOT HOME OR TRYING TO MAKE PEOPLE THINK THAT!

THE HOUSE WAS LOCKED TIGHT! AS FELIX CIRCLED TOWARD THE BACK, HE HEARD...

HOWLING... MUFFLED! COMING FROM WHERE?

FELIX DISCOVERED A SMALL, DUSTY BASEMENT WINDOW! A BLEACHED YELLOW BULB ILLUMINATED THE INTERIOR...

IT'S NESBIT, NAKED AS A JAYBIRD! LOOKS SCARED, WORRIED... WHAT THE!

I MUST BE NUTS!

HE'S TURNING INTO... A WOLF!

WEREWOLVES! THEY'RE REAL!

NESBIT'S A WEREWOLF!

FELIX FELT HIS SKIN CRAWL! WHAT HAD HE EXPECTED TO FIND? ANYTHING! ANYTHING! BUT THIS!

FELIX NEVER REMEMBERED THE MAD SPRINT TO HIS CAR! HIS HEART WAS POUNDING LIKE A TRIP-HAMMER, HIS FACE SHEENED IN SWEAT...

FELIX HAD KEPT THE SECRET! WHO WOULD BELIEVE ME, HE'D THOUGHT! THEN, EXACTLY A MONTH LATER...

I'VE BEEN CHECKING THE BOOKS, FELIX! THERE ARE SERIOUS DISCREPANCIES!

WHAT ARE YOU DRIVING AT?

EMBEZZLEMENT! THEFT! YOU'VE PICKED MY POCKETS FOR MONTHS!

NESBIT GLANCED AT HIS WATCH, THEN BOLTED FOR THE DOOR...

THAT'S WHAT YOU THINK, SHRIMP!

NO LAW AGAINST KILLING A WOLF! NONE!

FELIX ARRIVED AT NESBIT'S HOME, HIS PALMS CLAMMY WITH FEAR...

TOO LATE TO DO ANYTHING TONIGHT, BUT TOMORROW!

TOMORROW I'LL SEE YOU IN JAIL!

AN HOUR LATER, FELIX PUSHED THE LAST SILVER BULLET INTO THE CHAMBERS OF HIS .38 REVOLVER

HE'S ALREADY CHANGED! LISTEN TO HIM, BAYING LIKE A FIEND!

FELIX SUPPRESSED A RISING TERROR, SMASHED THE BASEMENT WINDOW! THE THING THAT WAS NESBIT MADE A SNARLING LEAP...

FELIX BROKE INTO THE HOUSE, HAULED THE WOLF BODY TO THE TRUNK OF HIS CAR...

IT'S DONE!
NO FINGERPRINTS!
NO BODY!

BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!

A FEW MINUTES LATER, WHEN THE GAME WARDEN PULLED HIM OVER TO MAKE A ROUTINE CHECK, FELIX WASN'T WORRIED...

SHOT A WOLF, BIG ONE! THAT'S ALL!

MIND IF I HAVE A LOOK ANYWAY?

YEP, MIGHTY BIG FELLA! ABOUT THE BIGGEST I EVER SAW!

GOT HIM WITH TWO CLEAN SHOTS!

REAR ENTRANCE
NESBIT PEGLER
TAXIDERMIST

THE NEXT MORNING FELIX MET ELISSA JUST AS HE WAS OPENING NESBIT'S SHOP...

NO, HAVEN'T SEEN HIM!

I'D BE FINISHED IF I HADN'T FINISHED HIM OFF IN THE FORM OF A WOLF! BET I COULD EVEN SELL HIS FELT FOR A FEW BUCKS! HA HA!

BUT FELIX DIDN'T SELL NESBIT'S FELT FOR A FEW DOLLARS! HE HAD ANOTHER IDEA, ONE THAT KEPT HIM WORKING LATE INTO THE NIGHT...

AND, HA HA, NO ONE'S GONNA SEE THAT LITTLE SHRIMP AGAIN!

INSIDE, FELIX BEGAN OPENING THE BLINDS...

THE RIGHT MAN COULD REALLY PUT THIS PLACE ON ITS FEET!

SOMEONE LIKE ME, A REAL CRAFTSMAN! FOR EXAMPLE, THAT GREY WOLF I SEWED UP LAST NIGHT! FANTASTIC JOB, DON'T YOU THINK?

AAAAAANIEEEE!

FELIX THOUGHT HE HAD EVERYTHING SEWED UP, BUT THEN HIS PLANS SPLIT A FEW SEAMS! POOR DEVIL! LOOKS AS THOUGH SEEING NESBIT KNOCKED THE STUFFINGS OUT OF HIM! WELL, HE SHOULD'VE KNOWN BETTER! EVEN A GEMPY-EYED GHOUL KNOWS A WEREWOLF WOULDN'T LET A LITTLE THING LIKE DYING KEEP HIM FROM TURNING BACK INTO A MAN AFTER THE PASSING OF THE FULL MOON!

MIKE
K&K



“EVENING CHILDREN. SORRY ABOUT THE WEATHER, 'NUTHER WET AND SOGGY EVE, BUT I SEE THAT YOU ALL SHOWED UP FOR THE CARNIVAL ANYWAY! MEET MISTER MENTALTO, A MAN WITH A BRILLIANT MIND WHO FOUND LIFE TOO DIFFICULT TO...

FACE IT!

BUNK AND JENSSEN'S CARNIVAL IS A BAD PLACE EVEN FOR THE RUGGED CARNIVAL FOLK TO WORK, BUT MENTALTO HAD REACHED THE END OF HIS ROAD AND THIS WAS WAITING FOR HIM!

BUNK AND JENSSEN'S
CARNIVAL

FAT
LADY



FIRE
EATER

WARRENELLA
THE SNAKE
CHARMER



IT ISN'T MUCH
OF A SHOW, BUT AT
LEAST THEY SHOULD
TAKE US ON! BE
CAREFUL OF THE
RAIN, SWEETHEART!

MISTER
MENTALTO
MIND READER
AND
RHODA



AS MENTALTO APPROACHES THEIR TRAILER, BUNK AND EXSTRONGMAN JENSSON CONFER ON THEIR CARNIVAL'S PRESENT CONDITION!

BAD, REAL BAD JENNIE! WE JUGGLED THE BOOKS TOO MUCH AND NOW OUR FUMBLINGS' SHOWIN'! THE CARNY BUMS ARE GETTIN' RESTLESS AND IF THEM ROUSTABOUTS EVER GANG UP ON YOU...

AW, DON' WORRY! I CAN HANDLE 'EM!

KNOCK!

GOOD EVENING SIRSI! I AM MENTALTO, A MENTALIST AND THIS IS RHODA! WE'D LIKE TO JOIN YOUR CARNIVAL!

WE COULD USE A MIND-READER, BUT ONLY IF YUH GOT SOME GIMMICK! SUMPTIN THAT WILL REALLY DRAW THE CROWDS!

RHODA IS MY GIMMICK!

FIRST, THIS MASK IS PASSED THROUGH THE AUDIENCE TO SHOW THAT IT LACKS DEVICES OF ANY SORT, AND THEN I PUT ON THE MASK AND RHODA AND I GO THROUGH OUR ACT!

DOES ANYONE EVER SEE YOUR FACE, DOC?

NEVER!

MY FACE WAS BADLY DISFIGURED DURING AN EXPERIMENT WHEN I WAS A SCIENTIST! THE ACCIDENT TOOK MY WIFE FROM ME! NO ONE HAS SEEN MY FACE SINCE, EXCEPT OF COURSE, RHODA!

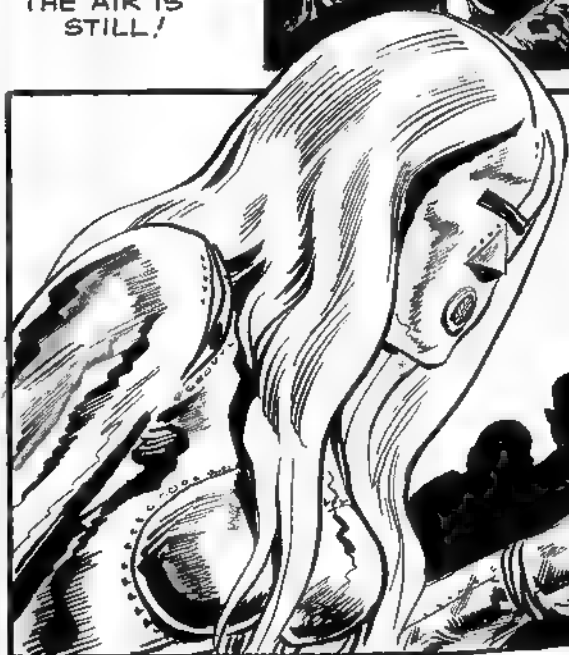
OKAY, DOC, WE'LL GIVE YOU AN HOUR TO SET-UP YOUR ACT IN THE MAIN TENT AND RUN THROUGH IT FOR THE CARNY FOLKS! IF THEY LIKE IT, YOU'RE IN!



AND SO THE CARNIVAL PEOPLE GATHER ALMOST BEGRUDGINGLY FOR THEY HAVE SEEN HUNDREDS OF "NEW" ACTS! AS THE LIGHTS DIM, RESPECTFULLY, THEY QUIET DOWN AND WAIT! NO ONE MOVES! THE SAWDUST SETTLES AND THE AIR IS STILL!



FRIENDS. YOU HAVE GATHERED HERE TO SEE A SHOWMAN -- PERHAPS SOME OF YOU ARE HERE TO SHOUT, "FRAUD, FAKE!" YOU WILL FIND AN OUTSIDER!



HE IS CONDEMNED TO WANDER AWAY FROM DECENT FOLK BECAUSE HIS FACE IS NOT PRETTY AND HIS MIND SEES THE RAW THOUGHTS OF YOUR MINDS! I ASK YOU TO BE KIND TO MY MASTER AND FOR HIS SAKE, THINK ONLY BEAUTIFUL THOUGHTS!



THE MAGNIFICENT MENTALTO!



A SET OF KEYS... THREE KEYS... TWO SILVER, ONE GOLD AND A RABBITS FOOT CHARM!



A PICTURE OF A GIRL... A VERY HANDSOME GIRL... MR. JENSSEN'S DAUGHTER, MARION.



A WOMAN'S NAME... PAMELA... NOT YOUR WIFE... HER NAME IS FRANCES... YOUR MISTRESS!



HA! HA! HA! HA!

GOOD STUFF! EVERYONE LOVED YA! SOME OF THAT'S JUST STANDARD MENTAL TRICKS, BUT SOME OF THE THINGS YOU DID, 'YA HADDA HAVE X-RAY VISION TO DO OR BE A GENUINE MIND READER!

MY TRICKS MUST REMAIN MY OWN SECRET! I'LL SIGN THE CONTRACT NOW AND THEN RHODA AND I MUST GET SOME SLEEP!



RHODA IS THE NAME OF MENTALTO'S WIFE! IMAGES OF THE WAY SHE WAS TORTURE MENTALTO'S MEMORY UNMERCIFULLY AS HE SPEAKS TO THE ROBOT!

IN A FEW MORE MONTHS WE'LL HAVE ENOUGH MONEY TO BEGIN EXPERIMENTING AGAIN! DON'T LOOK AT ME THAT WAY RHODA! I'M SORRY, I'M SO SORRY!



IT'S ALRIGHT, REALLY IT'S ALRIGHT!



THE NEXT DAY THE CARNIES FOUND THEMSELVES WITH A MYSTERIOUS, HOODED STRANGER!

REMEMBER ME? I'M MARION! MR. JENSSSEN'S DAUGHTER! ISN'T IT KINDA HOT TO WEAR THAT HOOD? HEY! AIN'T YUH GONNA TALK TO ME?

NO!



MENTALTO DID NOT WELCOME MARION'S INTEREST IN HIM! HE KNEW IT WAS NO MORE THAN A TEENAGER'S CURIOSITY! SHE MUST BE KEPT AWAY! HOWEVER, A WEEK LATER...

YOU!



YUH DIDN'T THINK I'D GIVEN UP DID YUH? I'M BUSTIN' TO KNOW WHAT'S UNDER THAT MASK! C'MON DOC, I WON'T BE SCARED!



GEE, DOCKIE, WON'T YOU LET ME
KISS YOU HELLO? I CAN'T KISS
YOU THROUGH THAT AWFUL
HOOD!



OWWW!!



WHAT'S GOING
ON HERE?



YOU KEEP AWAY FROM MY
BABY YOU MECHANICAL
MANIAC!

RHODA!



NUT! TREATS
THAT
MACHINE
LIKE A
PERSON!

RHODA,
BABY-DOLL,
ARE YOU
INJURED?

NO! I DON'T
THINK SO!

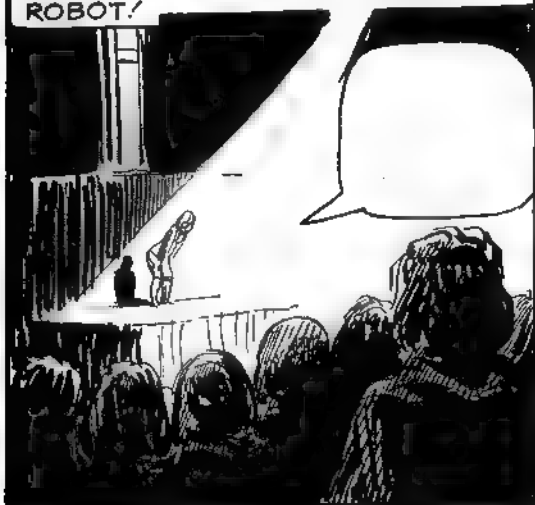


BUT RHODA'S
BEEN... DAMAGED!

GET 'ER FIXED!
WE BEEN
BILLING YER ACT
FER A WEEK 'N
TONIGHT'S
OPENING! YOU
GO ON TONIGHT
OR YOU DON'T
GO ON AT ALL!



NEARLY HALF THE TOWN TURNED OUT THAT EVENING TO SEE THE MENTALIST AND HIS FEMALE ROBOT!



HELP ME!

OH GOD, NO!



SHE'S DEAD!

FIENDS! YOU'VE KILLED HER!



MENTALTO WOULD NOT ALLOW HIMSELF TO BE CONSOLED, NOR WOULD HE ALLOW ANYONE TO HANDLE HIS FALLEN CREATION.



WHERE YOU BEEN, GIRL?

DADDY, WE'RE RICH! I WAS FOLLOWING MR. MENTALTO TO HIS TRAILER, AND GUESS WHAT I SAW WHEN I PEEKED INSIDE?

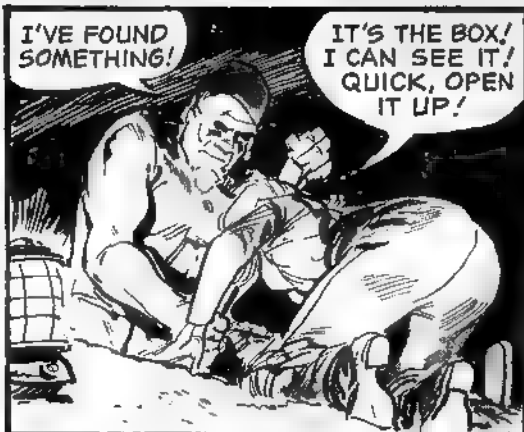


"MISTER MENTALTO REMOVED RHODA'S BRAIN AND PUT IT IN A BOX WHICH HE BURIED LATER! I COULDN'T SEE IT TOO CLEARLY, BUT IT WAS A SILVERY COLOR, MAYBE PURE SILVER PLATINUM!"





THIS IS IT, DADDY!
HE BURIED IT
VERY DEEP!



I'VE FOUND
SOMETHING!

IT'S THE BOX!
I CAN SEE IT!
QUICK, OPEN
IT UP!



OH LORD!
WHAT
HAVE
WE
DONE?



FOOLS! YOU HAD TO KNOW HOW A
ROBOT COULD THINK LIKE A HUMAN,
OBVIOUSLY BECAUSE SHE WAS A
HUMAN-- INSIDE! WE WERE BOTH
SCIENTISTS TRYING TO DISCOVER
HOW TO MINEATURIZE LIVING
THINGS!



IMAGINE, BUYING A
DOZEN SHEEP IN A BOX
THE SIZE OF AN EGG
CARTON AND THEN
RETURNING THEM TO
NORMAL SIZE! POOR
RHODA! THE ACCIDENT!
HER ENTIRE BODY WAS
SATURATED WITH THE
REDUCING RAYS! AS FOR
ME--I ONLY RECEIVED A
SMALL PORTION...



...IN
MY
FACE!

MY, MY! DIDN'T ANYONE
EVER TELL MENTALTO
THAT THREE IN ONE
GRAVE IS BAD LUCK,
EVEN IF ONE IS JUST
A MINI-GIRL?



AT LAST! OWN THIS RARE SET OF PRINCE VALIANT ADVENTURE PICTURE BOOKS!

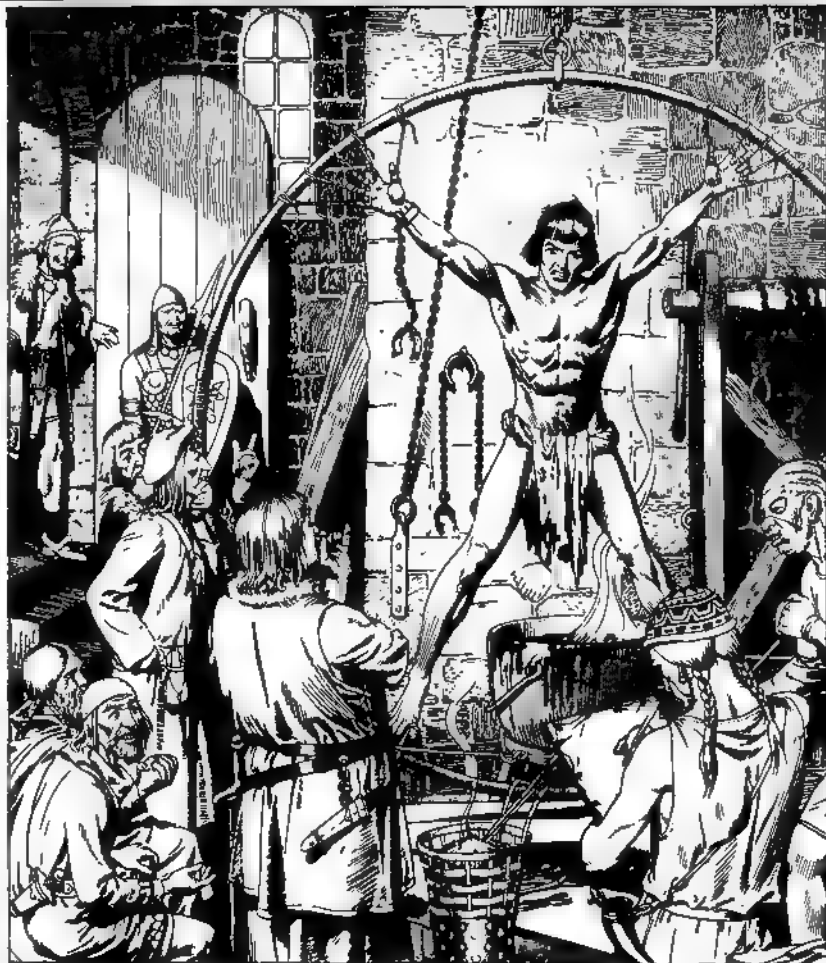
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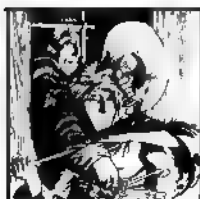
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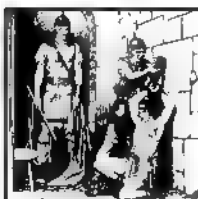
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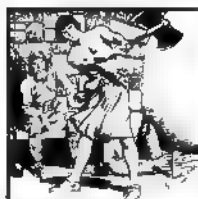
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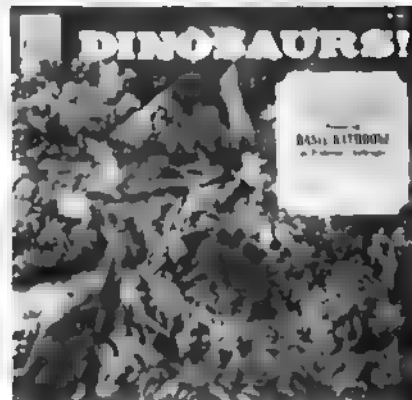
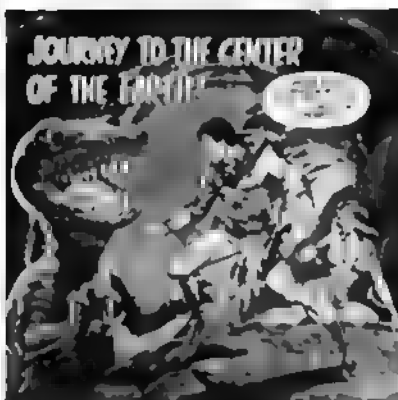
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The Batman (Lewis Wilson), and his young assistant, Robin, the Boy Wonder (Douglas Croft), hit on the trail of an enemy sabotage ring, when Bruce's girl friend, Linda (Shirley Patterson), asks the pair to help her free her uncle, Martin Warren (Gus Glassmire), from the clutches of the ring. The Batman learns that the ring plans to steal the city's radium supply from the city hospital, and hurries there to prevent the theft. A terrific fight ensues, and the attempted robbery is thwarted. However, during the battle, the Batman is forced to the roof, and staggered by the rain of blows poured on him, is finally sent reeling over the ledge into space!

CHAPTER 2—The Bat Cave

The Batman lands unhurt on a painter's scaffolding, and returning to the roof, captures one of the gangsters with Robin's aid. Back at the Batman's hideout, the Bat Cave, the gangster reveals that a Dr. Daka (J. Carroll Naish) directs the ring from the House of the Open Door. Disguised, the Batman and Robin visit the Open Door, and discover Linda a prisoner there. Hooking ropes over electric cables suspended between buildings, the Batman and Robin climb to the room where she is imprisoned and overcome a number of the mobsters. Then carrying the unconscious Linda, the Batman slowly makes his way back over the cables. One of the gangsters breaks a wire and touches the raw end against the cables. Sparks and flames engulf the pair. Suddenly the Batman loses his balance and he and Linda plunge into space!

CHAPTER 3—The Living Corpse

The Batman leaps from the car as it plunges over the cliff. At home, an assignment from Washington awaits him. He is to protect the new Lockwood airplane motor. Two of the Lockwood men are abducted by Daka and transformed into Zombies. Just before a test flight, the Batman secrets himself in the plane. No sooner is he hidden, than the new Zombies enter the plane dressed

in pilots' clothes. Following Daka's radio directions, the Zombies take the plane into the air. Suddenly the doctor sees the Batman on his television screen and orders the Zombies to attack. Out of control, the plane attracts attention and suffers a direct hit, and crashes to earth!

CHAPTER 4—Poison Peril

The Zombies are killed in the crack-up, but the Batman miraculously escapes injury. Back in town, Colton, (Charles Middleton), an old friend of Linda's uncle, is searching for him. He has discovered a radium mine. Daka learns of Colton's mine and attempts to lure him to an old smelter, in order to force him to reveal the mine's location. The Batman learns of Daka's ruse, and takes Colton's place at the rendezvous. He and Robin attack the gangster and a battle royal follows. In the melee, an acid vat is tipped over, and a stream of acid hits an exposed high-tension wire. There is a blinding flash. Debris and timber fall, burying the Batman!

CHAPTER 5—Executioner Strikes

Robin raises the trap-door and pulls his pal to safety. Linda, now a Zombie, writes a note to the Batman asking him to meet her at an isolated building. Though suspecting a ruse, the Batman goes there. Daka's men overpower him and pack him into a crate. The crate is then tossed into a cave of ravenous alligators. It crashes down on the beasts sending them into frenzied attack!

CHAPTER 6—Doom of the Rising Sun

Robin comes to the Batman's rescue. He knocks out one of the gangsters and frees his fighting friend. The pair crash into Daka's inner sanctum, and after a terrific battle, overpower Daka and his men. The Batman orders the doctor to return Linda and her uncle from their Zombie state to normality. After doing this, Daka, makes a break for freedom, and is accidentally plunged into the alligator pit. As the police arrive to take the gang into custody, the Batman and Robin disappear—their work, for the present, is done!

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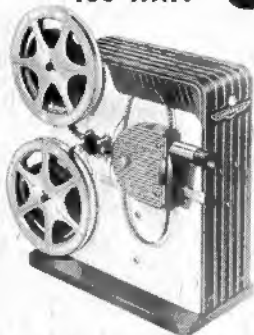
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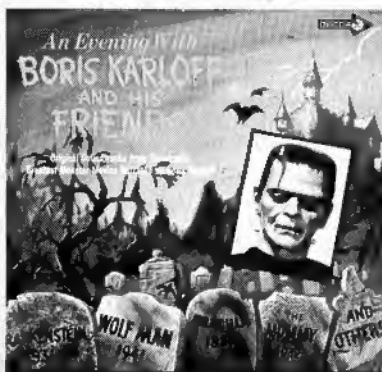


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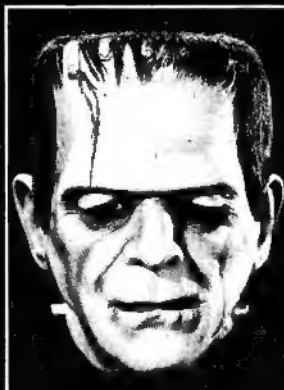
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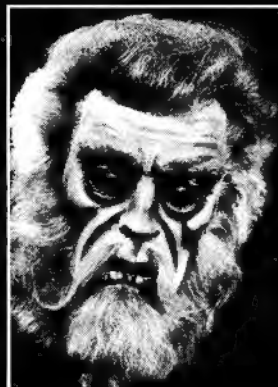
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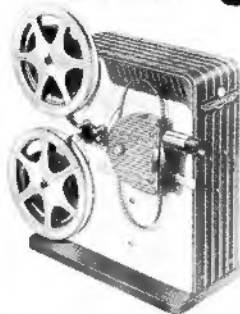
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